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*Manuals of Religious Instruction
for Pupil Teachers.*

EDITED BY

JOHN PILKINGTON-NORRIS, M.A.

CANON OF BRISTOL

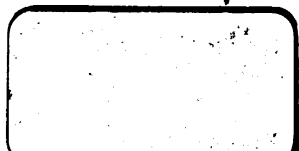
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MANUALS OF
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CANON OF BRISTOL

RIVINGTONS

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THE
OLD TESTAMENT

BY
E. I. GREGORY, M.A.
VICAR OF HALBERTON

FIFTH YEAR'S COURSE

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LESSON I.

THE PROPHETS OF THE CAPTIVITY— EZEKIEL.

Read Ezekiel, chapters i. 1-3, ii-viii., xi-xv., xvii-xxii., xxiv.,
xxxiii., xxxiv., xxxvi., xxxvii.

WE have seen, in the Third Part of this Manual, how the great judgment, foretold by ISAIAH, was suspended during the days of the good Josiah; but fell on his degenerate successor, Jehoiakim, who, in spite of JEREMIAH'S warnings, persisted in relying on the false alliance of Egypt, and so brought upon himself the crushing vengeance of Nebuchadnezzar.

We are to see, in the present part of the Manual, how in the evil days that followed, God "left not Himself without witness;" speaking to His people, even in the land of their exile, by His servants the prophets, and chiefly by the mouth of Ezekiel and Daniel. We will begin with EZEKIEL.

When Jeremiah saw the vision of two baskets of figs set before the Temple of the Lord,¹ one evil and one good, it was explained by God to mean the two divisions into which Judah was then broken; the captives taken, with the young king Jehoiachin,

¹ Jer. xxiv.

into Babylon, were the good, the remainder of the people left at Jerusalem were the evil figs.

The promises to the captives were very full and distinct; God would acknowledge them and look on them for good, they should eventually be brought again to their own land,—yet more, they should have a heart given to them to know the Lord, and should return to Him. The period of seventy years was also foretold as the length of the Captivity.¹

The exiles were cheered by a full knowledge of these promises, for the Prophet Jeremiah wrote them in a letter to them, and sent it from Jerusalem to Babylon. He gave them also some rules for their life while in exile. They were to sustain their interest in life, and not to live in despondency, to make marriages, to build houses and plant gardens, to seek the peace of the city to which they were brought, and to pray for it.² These words give us some idea of the manner of life of the people during the Captivity. It was by no means a second Egyptian bondage. The Jews in Babylon were not slaves, brought from their own country, and forced to obey a foreign ruler, but rather exiles. Districts of the country were made over to them; they had their own houses and could acquire property, and they still recognized the elders of their own nation. If we except some instances of oppression, the conduct of the king and people of Babylon was not severe towards them; they themselves affirmed that God had “made them also to be pitied of all those that carried them captives.”³

But to the Israelites the trials and the sufferings of captivity were very great. It has been remarked that it

¹ *Jer.* xxv. 11, 12.

² *Jer.* xxix. 1-14.

³ *Ps.* cvi. 46.

is always a misfortune to a people to be robbed of its national independence, but that this misfortune fell with far greater force on the Israelites than on any other people. Palestine was not only their fatherland, but a holy land to them ; exile from it meant banishment from the Temple, from the appointed feasts and from all the other outward ordinances of their religion. The belief in One unseen God separated them from other nations ; they had, it is true, often fallen into idolatry in their past history, but in the Captivity the better part of the nation had been carried away, and these clung with fervour to the purer faith. It was impossible for them to worship at the many shrines the ruins of which can still be traced in Babylon—great artificial hills, which broke the monotony of that flat country, with painted stages designed for the worship of the heavenly bodies. They could only sit by the side of the Babylonish rivers, and with harps hung on the willow trees, weep and lament for Zion, and desire that the tongue that sang or the hand that played in a strange land might lose its power to sing or play.¹ It was a time of trial, a time of purifying ; they clung to the promises announced by Jeremiah ; and by two evident signs God declared to them that He was indeed looking on them for good. These two signs were the continuance of the power of inspired psalmody, and the raising up of prophets among them. Those who have studied the Psalms deeply, differ as to the number which should be referred to this period, but some expressions in them appear to belong necessarily to the Babylonish captives. "Save us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the heathen, to give thanks unto

¹ Ps. cxxxvii.

Thy Holy Name, and to triumph in Thy praise."¹ So prayed the exiles, feeling deeply their loss of all the outward ordinances of their religion.

It was, however, in the gift of prophecy that they had the strongest assurance of God's continued recognition of them as His people. Not only by letters from Jeremiah, or words of other prophets treasured in the memory, were the hearts of the exiles cheered. In the land of their captivity one among themselves was specially chosen to be a messenger from God to them, a true prophet of the Lord.

Ezekiel was carried from his native land at the time when Nebuchadnezzar took the king Jehoiachin and the chief men of Judæa away, shortly after the death of Jehoiakim. Among the priests then taken to Babylon Ezekiel was one, and he very probably exercised some priestly functions in the land of exile, though he was never again to serve God in his office in the Temple. He lived at Tel-Abib, or "the Mound of Wheat-Ears," in the midst of a colony of his countrymen which was settled there by the side of the river Chebar, probably a great canal made by Nebuchadnezzar.² Isaiah received his call to be a prophet in the Temple itself; Jeremiah, at his home in Anathoth; to Ezekiel the call came "by the waters of Babylon," when he had been five years a captive. Walking by the river Chebar, he saw a glorious vision, and heard the voice of God, and at that vision fell prostrate on the ground.³ His charge was given him to speak God's words to all the house of Israel, and especially to those who were with him in captivity. It was to be nothing to him whether his words were heeded or not;

¹ Ps. cvi. 47.

² Ezek. iii. 15.

³ Ezek. i. 3-28.

he was to uplift his voice amid all discouragement, and God was to make his face strong against their faces, his forehead "as an adamant harder than flint."¹ "In bitterness of spirit, in the heat of his spirit," he returned to his own home and sat among his people, "astonished" and overpowered by the revelation, for seven days. At the end of that time the voice came again, proclaiming him to be the watchman to the house of Israel, and announcing the terrible responsibility, that the blood of those who died in iniquity unwarned by him should be required at his hand.

For the next twenty-two years Ezekiel received continual intimations from God, sometimes in the form of visions, sometimes in direct messages. These were delivered by him with unflinching boldness. Many of his words related to Jerusalem and the remnant of the nation left still in Judæa, and to seven heathen nations he denounced God's judgments; but the main part of his teaching and his warnings related to the exiles by whom he was surrounded.

Among these he was apparently treated with honour. The elders among them came often to his house, and sat before him to listen to his words, and to inquire of the Lord by him. This outward deference, however, gave no comfort to the soul of the prophet. These very elders, he was told, had "set up their idols in their heart," and according to those idols should they be answered. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I will not be inquired of by you."² With the people it was a pleasure and a fashion to listen to the eloquent words of the prophet; constantly they discussed them among themselves, and proposed to each other to go and

¹ Ezek. iii. 8, 9.

² Ezek. xiv. 3, xx. 3.

hear them: but it was to them only like hearing "a very lovely song" from a musician; they heard and did them not: and when he sought to impress the deep meaning of his message on them, he complained in the bitterness of his heart that they said of him, "Doth he not speak parables?"—riddles, enigmas, dark sayings, the meaning of which they cared not to unravel.

In his own person Ezekiel enacted as in a parable many of God's messages. He sighed with bitterness before their eyes, he suffered some of the miseries of the siege; he cried out with terror at the fearful vision of destruction revealed to him, all of which he repeated again to them of the Captivity.² He shrank from none of these things in the fulfilment of his mission. Once only his feelings as a priest recoil with horror from the ceremonial pollution demanded of him.³ And once, as has been said, "the feelings of the man burst in one single expression through the self-devotion of the prophet;" and he relates the death of his wife in the pathetic words, "The desire of his eyes was taken from him."⁴ At God's command, however, he forebore to make any sign of mourning; constant and unchanging, he, whose forehead was made "as an adamant harder than flint," was content even in his sorrow to be made a sign to his people. Unweariedly he taught them. They murmured against the second commandment, exclaiming that they were made to suffer for the idolatry of their fathers; and he showed them that the suffering inherited by children from parents can be but temporal, that it does not affect their moral state.

² xxxiii. 30-33.
³ Ezek. iv. 14.

² Ezek. xxi. 6, 7, iv., xii. 1-7, ix. 8, xi. 25.

⁴ Ezek. xxiv. 15-18.

There each one chooses for himself, and only "the soul that sinneth, it shall die." In the clear, calm judgment which was granted to him, Ezekiel perceived the spiritual meaning of God's law, and showed its application to human nature in all times and places, and not merely as intended for the guidance of the chosen people dwelling in the Holy Land. False prophets and prophetesses, however, "made the heart of the righteous sad, whom God had not made sad," and spoke against Ezekiel, prophesying peace when there was no peace.¹ These seem to have been numerous in the land of the Captivity; and two of them, Zedekiah and Ahab, are mentioned by Jeremiah as being especially wicked in their lives, and at length burnt to death by Nebuchadnezzar.² These false prophets continually affirmed that Jerusalem would not be taken by the king of Babylon, but at length the truth of Ezekiel's words about it was made known. Rather more than a year after the taking of Jerusalem, a fugitive from the city brought the news to the captives by the river Chebar. "The city is smitten."³ After this signal confirmation of his words, Ezekiel seems for a time to have ceased to prophesy, but he continued to guide and teach the people. One among his own countrymen must have certainly inspired him with hope. In the young Daniel, then growing up at the court of Babylon, he saw a bright instance of piety and wisdom, and he alludes to these characteristics as already well and publicly known.⁴

The later visions also of the first great prophet of the Captivity were of a more consoling and hopeful charac-

¹ Ezek. xiii. 22, 26.

² Jer. xxix. 21-23.

³ Ezek. xxxiii. 21.

⁴ Ezek. xiv. 14, xxviii. 3.

ter, though so deep in meaning, so obscure and mystic, that they are not yet fully understood; yet in the words "O My people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel,"¹ we see a suggestion of immortality. And in the last glorious vision of the Temple of God and the water of life, we are reminded of another, who, exiled for the faith to the lonely isle of Patmos, looked beyond the wild rocks and vast sea by which he was surrounded to an eternal and limitless abode. To the eye of Ezekiel the holy waters appeared to issue from the House of God, and he was told that "Everything that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live;" the fruit of the trees by its side "shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine." The same vision is vouchsafed to St. John. "He showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. On either side of the river was there the tree of life, and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."²

¹ Ezek. xxxvii. 12.

² Ezek. xlvii. 9, 12; Rev. xxii. 1, 2.

LESSON II.

THE PROPHETS OF THE CAPTIVITY— DANIEL.

Read Daniel, chapters i—vi. and ix.

THE letters of Jeremiah and the oral teaching of Ezekeïl had been the main channels of Divine instruction and guidance to the Israelites of the Captivity. As they read and mused over the one, or thronged the prophet's house to listen to the other,¹ the remembrance of a glorious past, the hope for the future, the right conduct to pursue in the present, were all kept alive in their minds. But as during the Egyptian captivity one Israelite was to be brought up at the court of Pharaoh, and instructed in all the learning of the Egyptians, so in this second Captivity one of the enslaved race was to be placed high in office, near the throne, and to learn all that the wisdom of the Chaldæans could teach him.

Jehoiakim had reigned three years in Jerusalem when Nebuchadnezzar, making a raid into Judæa, was bought off by the surrender of some of the vessels of the Temple, and certain children of the royal house, who were then looked on probably as hostages. The after revolts of the kings Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, and the final overthrow of the Jewish nation, rendered their captivity perpetual. Among these children were

¹ Dan. ix. 2; Ezek. xxxiii. 30, 31.

Daniel and his three companions, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. These youths were specially distinguished for beauty and intelligence, but it is evident that Daniel was from the first the leading spirit among them. Even thus early in life the first chapter of the Book of Daniel gives us an account of his holy resolution not to be "mingled among the heathen;" and he probably was very young when mentioned by Ezekiel as an instance of "wisdom and holiness."¹ His education was the best that Babylon could give, and that was a far more extended one than he could have acquired at Jerusalem. He was taught "the learning and the tongue of the *Chaldæans*." This word "*Chaldæan*" was originally applied to a particular tribe inhabiting the southern portion of Babylonia. It afterwards came to be given to the whole country and people of Babylon. In this sense it is often used in the Bible.² But there is yet a third sense in which we meet with it. The old southern dialect of the original *Chaldæans* was retained as a learned language, in which were written all books on the sciences then understood, while the people of Babylon commonly spoke in the time of Daniel an entirely different language. Those therefore who studied literature and the old tongue in which it was written, came to be called "*Chaldæans*,"—a class of learned people; and in this sense the word is used in the Book of Daniel. The science for which the *Chaldæans* were most famed was astronomy, for the study of which the clear atmosphere of their country and the high towers of their temples gave them peculiar facilities. In this learning, in which these *Chaldæans* had made great progress,

¹ Ezek. xiv. 14; xxviii. 3.² 2 Kings xxv.

Daniel was trained, and he and his companions were early placed in high office "before the king."¹

This king was Nebuchadnezzar, the foremost man in all the world at that period. His father Nabopolassar had successfully rebelled against the last king of Assyria, and in the overthrow of Assyria had gained most of the country which had belonged to it, and joined it to his newly-formed Empire of Babylon. Thus Babylon, once a tributary of Assyria, became the mistress of the world.² For only eighty-eight years did the kingdom of Babylon continue; and for half of that time its throne was occupied by Nebuchadnezzar. Even before the death of his father he was the successful military leader of his nation; and after his accession Judæa, Tyre and Egypt were in turn conquered by him. But his public works and his arts of peace were even greater than his warlike achievements. He had literally made "the Golden City;" for though there existed a Babylon before his time, yet the chief buildings and the great public works which made her the wonder of the world were constructed by him. He built, or at least repaired, the great wall which surrounded the city and the adjoining country, enclosing a space of many miles. The wall had 250 towers and 25 brazen gates, and was wide enough for a chariot with four horses to turn on it. To the same king are due the building of a magnificent palace, and of the great temples, the making of curious "hanging gardens" (gardens raised on high mounds of earth supported by masonry) to please the taste of his queen, and the construction of a variety of ingenious and useful canals and reservoirs for water.

¹ Dan. i. 19.

² Isa. xlvii. 5; Jer. l. 23.

The wonder of these works is increased when we remember that Babylonia was a country destitute of stone, and almost so of wood, and that all its buildings were constructed of bricks made of baked clay, and often painted and enamelled. The immense command of forced labour which Nebuchadnezzar possessed, from the many people whom he had led captive, could alone have enabled him to carry out these works in the space of forty-four years ; but the force and genius of the man who could do so, with even this power at his command, must have been very great. All the ruins now left of Babylon testify to his greatness ; they are little more than mounds or heaps of earth and bricks ; and on the bricks almost everywhere is inscribed the name of Nebuchadnezzar. We can scarcely wonder that, as he walked on the roof of the gorgeous palace he had made, and surveyed all round him the evidences of his genius and power, he should be tempted to exclaim, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?"

Before this man, fierce, hasty, and cruel, yet not without generous and noble impulses, Daniel was brought, "to declare the king's dream² and its interpretation." His prayers and those of his companions had been heard ; and before he entered the king's presence he had already thanked God Who had made known to him the mighty mystery, a mystery which involved a great part of the world's history. The different parts of the great

² Whether Nebuchadnezzar had really forgotten the dream is doubtful. The words "the thing is gone from me," not improbably mean "I have made this decree." The king wanted to test his wise men. If they could tell the dream, they could also interpret it.

image seen by the king are explained to mean four different empires, clearly those successively of Babylon, Persia, Greece (under Alexander), and Rome; all these to be succeeded by the Kingdom of Christ, "a Kingdom which shall never be destroyed," a stone "cut out of the mountain without hands" (that is, not by human strength), which should break in pieces all that had gone before. The immediate result of this interpretation was the elevation of Daniel to the highest offices of the kingdom, and the acknowledgment by the king that his God was "a God of gods, and a Lord of kings."

This recognition did not, however, prevent the king from erecting the golden image, which was probably designed to represent Merodach or (Bel-Merodach), the god of Nebuchadnezzar's greatest reverence.¹ From the persecution undergone by his steadfast companions, Daniel was saved either by his high office, or by his absence from Babylon at the time. He was there, however, when the king, "at rest in his house and flourishing in his palace," was again troubled with a vision from God. Some affection for the king is shown by Daniel's astonishment and trouble "for one hour," as the meaning of the vision became clear to him, and by his prayer that Nebuchadnezzar would repent, and especially show mercy to the poor,—doubtless the down-trodden captives employed on his great works. The counsel by which, unlike the spirit shown by Jonah, Daniel would have averted the punishment foretold by himself was not followed. A year more, and the king was afflicted by a terrible disease, known to physicians as lycanthropy. "It consists in the

¹ Jer. l. 2; Dan. iv. 8.

belief that one is not a man but a beast, in the disuse of language, the rejection of all ordinary human food, and sometimes in the loss of the erect posture and a preference for walking on all fours."¹ Probably for seven² years Nebuchadnezzar was afflicted in this manner, and confined to the private gardens of the palace, while his queen ruled the kingdom in his place. At the end of the allotted time his intellect returned to him again; and his thanksgiving to God, his acknowledgment of His power, and his willingness to show the signs God had wrought in him, finely illustrate the best side of his character. He was now an old man, and seems to have died not very long after his recovery, at the age of nearly eighty, having reigned forty-four years.

He was succeeded by his son Evil-Merodach, who reigned but for two years, but during that time released Jehoiachin, king of Judah, from the prison where Nebuchadnezzar had kept him for thirty-five years, and treated him kindly.³

Evil-Merodach was killed in a conspiracy made against him. Two other kings mounted the throne; but after four years another change raised to the throne a Babylonian named Nabonadius, called Labynetus by the Greeks.

Nabonadius seems to have married a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar's, by whom he had a son, named Belshazzar, who was early in life associated with

¹ Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*.

² The term "seven times" (Dan. iv. 16, 23) is obscure. It may mean three and a half years, each summer and each winter being a "time." The inscriptions indicate a suspension of Nebuchadnezzar's great works for a period of about four years.

³ Eze. xxv. 27-30.

his father in the kingdom. These changes of government affected the position of Daniel. He was no longer "ruler over the whole province of Babylon," but still was employed in state affairs. We find him, in the third year of Belshazzar, at Shushan, or Susa, in Elam, a province at this time belonging to Babylon. There, faithful still, he did the king's business,¹ there visions were vouchsafed to him, and angels made them clear to him.²

The invasion of Babylonia by Cyrus may have caused Daniel's return to the city of Babylon. For a time the Persian army lay at some distance from it; but after defeating the elder king Nabonadius (who fled to a neighbouring city called Borsippa), Cyrus advanced and besieged the young king Belshazzar in Babylon. The renowned city walls, however, proved too strong for him; and marching away from their immediate neighbourhood, he proceeded to dig a channel which should draw off the waters of the river Euphrates, which ran through the city, and thus open a passage for his troops. Still this plan could not have succeeded had the Babylonians kept watch and closed the river gates. But Cyrus waited till the time of a great festival, when the whole city was given up to revelry and amusement. Madly trusting to their strong walls, they left them unwatched and unguarded. Within the palace the boy-king held his banquet, offering libations to the false gods of Babylon, while he drank from the sacred vessels of the Jewish Temple. In the midst of the feast appeared the handwriting on the wall, words which none could read, striking terror to the heart of the king and his court. In his distress

¹ Dan. viii. 2, 27.

² Dan. viii. 15-19.

the queen-mother came to him. She is distinguished from the "wives" of Belshazzar,¹ and was evidently his mother, herself the daughter of Nebuchadnezzar. It is he of whom she speaks as "thy father," there being but one word for father and grandfather in either Chaldee and Hebrew. She recalls to him Nebuchadnezzar's former minister Daniel, who must then have been an old man. He alone could read the words of doom; and at once, in the presence of his court, Belshazzar proclaimed him "third ruler in the kingdom," that is, next after himself and his father, the two joint-kings. Belshazzar's power to raise or to put down was, however, at an end. That night, even in the palace where he was feasting, the young king was slain. The Persians had entered the city by the bed of the river, and before the morning Cyrus their leader was the master of it. The great prophecy of Jeremiah against Babylon began to be fulfilled. "The mighty men of Babylon had forborne to fight, the broad walls of Babylon were utterly broken, and her high gates burned with fire," while hurried messengers escaped away "to show the king of Babylon that his city was taken at one end."²

Thus Babylon fell into the power of the united peoples—the Medes and Persians. Cyrus, her conqueror, had other conquests to pursue, and therefore made Darius the Mede king over Babylon. We are expressly told that "Darius the Median *took*," or received, "the kingdom," and that he was "*made king* over the realm of the Chaldeans."³ He was already past sixty years of age, and his reign did not last long.

¹ Dan. v. 10, 2, 3.

² Jer. li. 30, 58, 31.

³ Dan. v. 31; ix. 1.

During it, the envy of the princes caused Daniel, who had again become the chief minister of the king, to be cast into a den of lions. This "den" was probably a kind of pit such as is used by Eastern kings to confine wild beasts; it had a stone which covered the "mouth" or entrance, but was otherwise open to the air, so that the king could converse with Daniel before the stone was removed.

Daniel was now an old man; his habit of constant prayer, his pious recognition of God, was the same as in his early life. He had prayed *then* to God to make known to him the king's dream; *now*, in the time of Darius, he prayed three times a day, looking towards that holy city, which he had left as a child, and was never to revisit. As a child he had refused to defile himself with the royal dainties, as an old man he fasted sometimes for three weeks at a time.¹ To prayer and fasting he joined meditation on the Word of God. Some expressions used by him seem taken from Ezekiel, who was the prophet of the Captivity during his youth; in these last days of his life we find him studying the Book of Jeremiah, yearning for the end of "the desolations of Jerusalem,"² and praying for pardon and restoration in words which show how clear was his spiritual insight. He lived to see that restoration. Too old to accompany his brethren in their return, he was yet alive in the third year of Cyrus, king of Persia, who in his first year issued the decree for the return of the Jews to their native land.³

To the "man greatly beloved,"⁴ however, a higher reward was vouchsafed. As he grew older it was not

¹ Cp. Dan. i. 8, 12, ix. 3; x. 2, 3.

³ Dan. x. 1; Ezra i. 1-4.

² Dan. ix. 2.

⁴ Dan. x. 11, 19.

the dreams of heathen kings, but the destinies of many nations, and the coming of the Messiah, which were unfolded in vision to him. Angels sent from heaven strengthened him, and at the last a promise of a more enduring rest than the earthly Canaan could give was made. "Go thou thy way till the end be : for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days."²

² Dan. xii. 13.

LESSON III.

THE PROPHETS AFTER THE RETURN FROM THE CAPTIVITY—HAGGAI AND ZECHARIAH.

Read Ezra i., iii—vi. ; Haggai ; Zech. i—iv., vi. 9-15, vii., viii.

IT was probably but for a short time that Darius the Mede ruled over Babylon. The real conqueror, Cyrus, soon reigned in person ; and one of his first acts was to issue an edict for the restoration of the Jews to their native land. About 170 years before, Isaiah had prophesied of Cyrus, who was called the Lord's "Anointed," His "Shepherd," who should perform all His pleasure ; "Even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built ; and to the Temple, Thy foundation shall be laid." ¹ The means by which God moved the resolution of Cyrus may have been partly political considerations ; but the chief agent probably was the aged prophet Daniel, of whose interpretation of the writing at Belshazzar's feast and deliverance from the lions' den he must have heard. Daniel may have showed the words of Isaiah to Cyrus, who in his proclamation says, "The Lord God of heaven . . . hath charged me to build Him a house at Jerusalem." ²

The seventy years foretold for the Captivity had passed away. A new generation had sprung up, and

¹ Isa. xlv. 1, xlv. 28.

² Ezra i. 2.

perhaps it should not surprise us to find that many of those born during that time had no desire to leave the land of their birth, and clung to their homes in Babylon. The more enthusiastic and the nobler spirits among them, however, hailed with joy the opportunity for return, and about 50,000 set forth on their way to Jerusalem. The greater number of these belonged to the tribes of Levi, Judah, and Benjamin, but many of other tribes accompanied them.¹ Some of these were aged men who had seen Jerusalem in their youth, and yearned to return; and there were also priests, Levites, singers, and porters for the Temple service.

The leader of the host was a prince of the house of David, named Zerubbabel. This name signifies "dispersed," or "begotten in Babylon." Like Daniel and his companions, he had received another name at the foreign court where he had lived, that of Sheshbazzar.² He was the representative of the line of David, the hope of the royal house, and recognized as Prince of the Captivity by the Jews. He was made by Cyrus governor of Judæa, which was to be not a separate kingdom, but a province of Persia. He proved himself a worthy leader. Though he knew the promises of everlasting kingship to his own line, he was loyal to Cyrus who had sent him; and his unfailing faith and steady devotion to God's service were rewarded by Divine assurances of favour. He was accompanied by the high priest Joshua, of whom all that we know indicates a singularly pure and noble character. During his high priesthood the perfect harmony existing between priests and prophets speaks well for his influence, which is in strong contrast to that of the high priest in

¹ Ezra i. 5; 1 Chron. ix. 3; Ezra ii. 70.

² Ezra i. 8, v. 14, 16.

Jeremiah's time.¹ Among the host were also Haggai and Zechariah, whose great mission it was first to speak with the burning words of prophecy after the return.

We can imagine the feelings of the returning exiles, the hopes of the young, the memories of the old who had seen the Holy City before, the joy of all. They were, as they themselves expressed it, "like them that dream;" and with laughter and singing they spoke of "the great things" the Lord had done for them, adding the prayer, that as in the spring the empty water-courses of the hot south country are filled again with water and become rivers, so might all the children of the Captivity return and flow together in their own land.²

But they did not find the land on their return such as their fathers had found it when, led by the first Joshua, they inherited the labour of the people.³ During the Captivity the land had lain desolate, and the returning Jews had to clear their fields of the jungle, to build their houses, and to protect themselves from enemies dwelling around. At first they began with alacrity the work of rebuilding the Temple with which they were charged. They had with them the sacred vessels which, carried off by Nebuchadnezzar and used by Belshazzar at his feast, had been restored by Cyrus. But there was no Temple in which to place them. The first act of the leaders was to raise up again the altar of burnt-offering. Probably in clearing the ruins of the Temple they found the old foundation of this altar, and "upon his bases" they set up the new one, before the Temple porch. Once more from this time the daily sacrifices were offered and all the appointed feasts

¹ Jer. xx. 1, 2.

² Ps. cxxvi.

³ Ps. cv. 44.

kept, the Feast of Tabernacles occurring a fortnight after the raising of the altar.

Assisted by the decree of Cyrus, they procured cedar-trees from Lebanon, as Solomon had previously done, to rebuild the Temple, and early in the next year their preparations were forward enough for them to lay the foundation of the House itself. This was done with all the solemnity and pomp they could command. Once more God's people stood on the hill of Zion, the priests with their trumpets, the sons of Asaph singing the very same words as their fathers had sung when Solomon dedicated the first Temple. But how changed was the scene ! Instead of the finished courts and beautiful house of the great king, they were surrounded by heaps of rubbish, deserted and ruinous streets, desolation everywhere. At the sight and the thoughts awakened, those who remembered the past glories burst into tears, while the young and hopeful shouted for joy. None can have felt these mingled emotions more than Zerubbabel. The heir of David and of Solomon, he stood at last near the sepulchres of his fathers, he saw the place where they had ruled, he was the successor to their work, for his own hands laid the foundation of the second Temple ;¹ yet he was but an officer appointed by a foreign king, at the head of a small and weak band of people, the "remnant" who had returned ; the promises to the line of David seemed far from fulfilment, the discouragements to the work before him were many and great.

The greatest hindrance was probably caused by the conduct of the heathen colonists living around the Jews. These "Samaritans" (whose name becomes

¹ Zech. iv. 9.

so familiar to us in the New Testament) were not Israelites, but were a mixed race of people sent to occupy the land more than a hundred years before by Esarhaddon, king of Assyria. They claimed to help in the building, but were rejected by Zerubbabel and the high priest on account of their foreign birth and heathen practices.¹ From this time they became active enemies; they sent messengers with false accusations against the Jews to the Persian court, and they probably intercepted the supplies of stone and timber for the building. Added to this, came the extreme difficulty of cultivating the land. Under these hindrances the faith of the Jews failed, and they gradually ceased to build the House whose foundation they had so quickly laid. Even the noble governor and the high priest became discouraged, and selfish desires crept in among the chief men. They made houses for themselves which were "cieled," that is, inlaid with cedar, for which they probably used the wood which had been brought for the Temple.² For this selfish neglect and want of faith God's punishment fell on them. A terrible drought came upon the land; sudden storms destroyed the labours of their hands; and it seemed in vain to work. They sowed much and brought in little. If they went to a heap of sheaves for corn or to the wine-press for wine, they found the yield less than they expected.³ Yet they did not perceive that it was really God's blessing, withheld from them because of their want of faith, that they needed. At length a decree from the Persian court forbade any further attempts at building.

¹ 2 Kings xvii. 29-41.

² Haggai i. 4, 8; Ezra iii. 7.

³ Haggai i. 6, 10, 11, ii. 15-17; Zech. viii. 10.

And now, at the darkest time, came a bright light. Once more prophetic voices were raised among God's people, and two servants of God, one of them by birth a priest, were empowered to deliver "the word of the Lord" to His people. The first of these was Haggai. On the occasion of the Feast of the New Moon (the first day of the sixth month) he spoke to the people assembled in the unfinished building. Respecting their own words that the time was not come to build, he urged on them that it *was* the time, for famine and drought were come on them because they had not done it, but had spent the time on their own dwellings.¹ "Consider your ways," or, "Set your heart upon your ways;" this is the constant call of the earnest practical prophet, and the call was not unheeded. Zerubbabel and Joshua were stirred up at once, and the people followed them, so that, after a suspension of about fourteen years, the work was resumed with vigour. Immediately came another message from the lips of Haggai, "I am with you, saith the Lord."²

It took four years to complete the Temple after this second attempt at building was made. For five months during the first of these years Haggai from time to time delivered messages from God. When the joyous Feast of Tabernacles came round (the twenty-first day of the seventh month³), he uttered strengthening words to the rulers and the people. They might remember the old Temple, and despair of ever equalling its glory and beauty, but he was commissioned to tell them that the glory of this second house should be far greater than that of the first, and that after they had seen the nations around them convulsed and shaken, in that place where

¹ Haggai i.² Haggai i. 13.³ Haggai ii. 1.

they were should peace be given. Peace, but only after the overthrow of thrones and kingdoms,—such an overthrow as Daniel had witnessed when he interpreted the king's dream at Babylon. The great empires of the heathen world should fall at length, and the kingdom which should never be destroyed be set up.

Haggai was now joined in his work by another, equally commissioned to speak God's words to His people. The "young man" Zechariah, who had certainly been born during the Captivity, was especially opposed to that temper of mind which, looking back with regret for the past, weakened the hands of those who would work in the present. Haggai had alluded to the "ancient men," in whose eyes the house now building was as nothing ;¹ Zechariah called to remembrance their fathers' refusal to hearken to the former prophets, and bade them not imitate them ; and at another time, showed how their sins were the cause of the Captivity.² The hopeful present, the glorious future, were all in all to Zechariah, and in seven wondrous visions much relating to these was revealed to him. The scattering of enemies, the enlargement of Jerusalem and her purification from evil, these things he looked forward to with longing ; in the present he recognized the fitness and the noble qualities of the men who were striving with such great difficulties. Joshua, the High Priest, might be accused of evil, and perhaps defamed at the Persian court : he saw him tried at the heavenly tribunal, accused by the Great Adversary, and acquitted by Jehovah. Many might "despise the day of small things," and say that Zerubabel could never finish the great work he had begun :

¹ Haggai ii. 3.

² Zech. i. 4-6, vii. 11-14.

the prophet declared that the hands which laid the foundation should bring forth the headstone thereof "with shoutings." When some, taking the despondent view, would have continued in the Holy Land the fasts instituted for the captives while dwelling in Babylon, Zechariah declared these signs of punishment ended with the punishment itself, and that they ought to be turned into cheerful feasts. "Therefore love the truth and peace," he continued, and spoke of Jerusalem as henceforth a centre of worship to all nations. So with sharp warnings, direct commands, and strong hopeful words did the two new prophets animate the people. The effect of their words was marvellous. The old hindrances were still there, plenty was as yet only promised, the Samaritan enemies were still busy, the Persian decree was still in force against them, yet with redoubled courage they so heartily resumed their work, that when next their enemies wrote to the king of Persia they said, "This work goeth fast on, and prospereth in their hands."

But a new king, named Darius, had now succeeded to the throne. He searched for the decree of Cyrus in favour of the Jews, and when he had found it, reversed the edict which his predecessor had made against them. Thus unexpectedly the chief of their hindrances were removed. With the royal favour they worked on, and in four years from the time when the work was resumed the second Temple was finished. It was probably larger than that built by Solomon, but in splendour of decoration fell as much below it as the sacrifice offered on the day of dedication did below that presented by the great king of Israel.² But it stood complete, and

² Compare Ezra vi. 17; 1 Kings viii. 63.

was a standing memorial of the fact that true prophets had been granted to the returned people, that their words had abundant power, and that they had entirely stirred up the courage and faith of those who heard them. Zerubbabel finished the house he had begun; he placed the headstone on it, and heard the cries, "Grace, grace unto it." Of the rest of his life we know nothing. He had been assured that he was to God as the signet ring so dear to an Oriental prince, worn ever on his right hand or suspended round his neck. And doubtless through the remainder of his life he was the cherished and protected of God. Yet, as has been said, "all the tender images connected with the signet ring" are only perfectly true of the great Son of Zerubbabel,^{*} Solomon, and David, whose presence in the rebuilt Temple was its greatest glory, and who set up that kingdom which will continue for ever and ever.

^{*} Matt. i. 13.

LESSON IV.

THE PROPHETS AFTER THE RETURN FROM THE CAPTIVITY—MALACHI.

Read Ezra vii., viii. 15-36, ix—x. 19; Neh. i., ii., iv—vii. 5, viii., ix., xii. 27—xiii.; Mal. i—iv.

FIFTY-SEVEN years had passed away since the Temple at Jerusalem was consecrated, when Ezra the scribe left Babylon to visit his brethren in Judæa (B.C. 458). Their condition had not improved during those years. The enthusiasm kindled by the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, which had borne the people over their difficulties, and brought about the completion of the Temple, had passed away. The leaders Zerubbabel and Joshua were dead; we hear of no governor appointed at once to fill the place of the first, and the descendants of Joshua who filled the high priest's office were not worthy of their father. The walls of Jerusalem remained unbuilt, and through the mixed marriages which were growing common the people were fast becoming amalgamated with the Samaritans and the heathen nations around. Ezra was himself a priest, but the title most often given to him was "the scribe." "He was a ready scribe in the law of Moses."¹

It was probably during the Captivity that the scribes became a distinct class of men. They were the inter-

¹ Ezra vii. 6.

preters of the Law, they expounded it when the old Hebrew in which it was written could no longer be understood by the people, who had acquired a new dialect since their residence in Babylon; they were the copiers who multiplied manuscripts of it. Their knowledge gave them a considerable influence over the people; we see how they afterwards used it by the notices we have of them in the New Testament. They had then become followers of the letter of the Law, not of the spirit; and our Lord classed them with the Pharisees as hypocrites, "outwardly appearing righteous unto men, within full of hypocrisy and iniquity."¹ In these earlier days of the return of the Jews, however, they held a very different position, and were probably the main cause of the Scriptures not being totally forgotten. None among them was more pure-hearted than Ezra. He "had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments." It was to reform the abuses which had become common among the Jews that Ezra paid his first visit to Jerusalem. His favour and influence with the then reigning king of Persia, Artaxerxes Longimanus, and his high character and learning, secured him an influence on his arrival. Even by the king he was known as "a scribe of the law of the God of heaven,"² and those who dreaded the evil result of the mixed marriages appealed to him at once as to one who could and would effect a reformation. He has left us a full account of his conduct on this occasion. The danger was a very great and imminent one, nothing less than that "the holy seed mingled among the heathen" should cease to be

¹ Matt. xxiii. 28.

² Ezra vii. 21.

a distinct people. The people appeared cured of their love for idolatry through the sorrows of the Captivity, but this union with other nations must, if it continued, make them to become a heathen people. Ezra's grief at the accounts given him was therefore intense, and he was overpowered with astonishment that the lessons of the Captivity should be so forgotten and such great ingratitude shown to God. As he sat in silence on the ground, in front of the Temple, with rent garment and torn dishevelled hair, he may have felt the vanity of his hopes of finding a holy city, obedient to the law, at Jerusalem. It was scarcely four months since his arrival, and already he saw that the Law could become forgotten as easily among the returned captives who lived around the newly-restored Temple as among their brethren left in Babylon. For the time, however, Ezra succeeded in effecting a reformation. His own profound grief communicated itself to the people. Assembled in the court of the Temple, they sat trembling, while the rain fell heavily, as at that season of the year (December) it still does in Palestine. It was impossible that they could remain exposed to it while the business went forward. They returned to their homes, and a council was regularly appointed to carry out the matter. In two months the number of those (113) guilty of these mixed marriages was ascertained, and they were separated from their strange wives. The most painful and significant fact brought to light was, that four members of the high priest's own family, and thirteen other priests, were among the guilty.¹

The effects of this reformation lasted for some time,

¹ EZRA x. 18-22.

the practice of mixed marriages having been checked. Ezra himself seems to have returned to Babylon. Thirteen years elapsed after his visit, when another Jew took his journey from Persia to Jerusalem.

Nehemiah filled the high station of cupbearer to Artaxerxes, king of Persia, and was nominated by him governor over the province of Judæa.¹ His character is known to us through the book which bears his name, great part of which is certainly written by himself. We there see him passionately devoted to his country and to his God, a man full of generous self-sacrifice, and of burning zeal, which showed itself in righteous anger against pretended worshippers as well as open enemies of the Lord. Nothing could discourage him, no difficulties wearied him; he stood almost single-handed: but the constant prayers which are a characteristic of his writings show his never-failing confidence in God. The state of the people had not improved since Ezra's visit. In Persia Nehemiah heard of the still unbuilt walls and gates of the city, and yearned to put his own hand to the work. When he had reached Jerusalem, and rode alone at night round the ruined city, no sight of heaps of rubbish, and of gates burned as the Chaldæans had left them, could discourage his resolution. When at length he got the work of the rebuilding the walls commenced, no open threatenings or secret machinations of surrounding enemies could prevail with him to stop it. His words are those of an intensely strong man, self-reliant, or rather solely reliant on his God. "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to

¹ The word 'Tirshatha' in all probability means governor.

you?" And to the false pretended friend who joined the plot against him, "Should such a man as I flee? and who is there, that, being as I am, would go into the Temple to save his life? I will not go in." Such determination was certain to be crowned with success, and in fifty-two days the ruined walls were rebuilt. The solemn dedication of the walls was delayed for about twelve years more; it was probably necessary to obtain the express permission of the king of Persia for an act which could have easily been misrepresented to him by Nehemiah's enemies. During this time, however, the indefatigable governor toiled on, aided now by Ezra, who seems to have returned to Jerusalem at about the time of the completion of the walls. In concert they extended the population of Jerusalem,² provided for its defence, caused the law to be read and explained, and the feasts to be celebrated, and induced the chief members of every class to set their seal to a covenant that they would keep the law.²

But Nehemiah was still the subject of a foreign king, and his return to Persia became necessary. He was obliged for a time to leave the city for which he had done so much; and Ezra, of whom we hear no more, either accompanied him, or may have died at this time. How long Nehemiah was absent we cannot say with certainty. But we know that, when he returned, he found that the people for whom he had so laboured had fallen away from God and from obedience to His law.³

Undaunted as ever, Nehemiah (who now dedicated the walls with great solemnity) commenced a second reformation. And now another helper stood by his

² Neh. vii. 4, xi. 1, 2.

² Neh. viii. ix. x.

³ Neh. xiii. 6, 7.

side, and at this time, when Ezra the priest was no longer there to aid him, the prophetic spirit again, and for the last time for many years, was manifested in Jerusalem.

Malachi has been called "the Seal" of the prophets, as his words close the Old Testament Scriptures. Of himself we know absolutely nothing save his name, but we can fix the time of his prophecies with great probability, when we remark that the sins which he especially denounced were exactly those which Nehemiah found again reappearing on his second arrival at Jerusalem. It is evident that Malachi writes at a time when the Temple-worship has been long re-established, long enough for its services to have fallen into a disrepute, and for its priests to have sunk into a negligence, which shows a great change from the days when Joshua judged in the house and kept its courts as high-priest.¹ Now, the prophet represents the priests of his time as offering to Jehovah polluted bread for the shewbread, and sick and lame and diseased beasts as the sacrifices on His altar. "What a weariness is it!" they said, and showed their contempt for the degraded offerings which they themselves presented.² Would they, the prophet asks, have offered such to their governor? Nehemiah indeed levied no taxes, like former governors, for the maintenance of his household,³ but, in accordance with Eastern custom, he must have had presents offered him, without which it would be an indignity to approach the governor. The priests, however, did not imitate his generosity in receiving no regular payments; not one among them would shut the Temple

¹ Zech. iii. 7.

² Mal. i. 7, 8, 13, 14.

Neh. v. 14, 15.

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doors or light the altar fires for nothing.* And thus, like Hophni and Phinehas of old, they "made the Lord's people to transgress," and brought into utter contempt the service of the sanctuary.

So Malachi describes the priests of his time, and the picture well agrees with what Nehemiah tells us. On his return, he found that the high priest Eliashib, who had connected himself with the Ammonite Tobiah, had assigned to his relative a considerable portion of the holy House itself.² "An Ammonite shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord:"³ so said the law of Moses; but a priest who called the service of the Temple "a weariness," would not hesitate to bring him into the sacred precincts. There was no longer a living example of holiness to be found in the chief of the priests; but the prophet sets forth under the name of Levi the most perfect ideal of the true priest ever described. "The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with Me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity."⁴

Eliashib and his priests, however, only turned the people around them to iniquity. When Nehemiah returned from Persia, he found the great evil from which Ezra had cleansed the people, the mixed marriages with the heathen around, again a common practice. In about twenty years the change effected by Ezra had disappeared, and the children of these marriages could not even speak the Jews' language.⁵

* Mal. i. 10.

² "The chamber" assigned to Tobiah was probably a great part of the outbuilding which surrounded the Temple on three sides, and contained three storeys and many rooms.

³ Deut. xxiii. 3.

⁴ Mal. ii. 6.

⁵ Neh. xiii. 23, 24.

As in the evil sacrifices offered, so here the high priest and his family had led the way in the sin. To the account which Nehemiah gives of this, Malachi adds, that in so doing the Jew had "sinned against the wife of his youth." Many had apparently put away their Hebrew wives to take the strange women in their place, and it is to these deserted women that Malachi appears to allude when he speaks of their "covering the altar of the Lord with tears."¹ Once more Nehemiah caused a reform. He cleansed the people from the sin, but chased away the grandson of the high priest, who had, as he said, "defiled the priesthood," and married the daughter of Sanballat.² This unworthy priest repaired to his father-in-law, and became high priest of that Samaritan temple built on Mount Gerizim, beneath which our Lord sat when He talked to the woman of Samaria.³

The evil example of the priests, and the custom of mixed marriages with the heathen, had led to a general disregard of the law of God. Nehemiah found "that the portions of the Levites had not been given them;" Malachi declared that the people robbed God in that they did not pay their tithes and offerings. According to their different vocations the governor and the prophet laboured to remedy this; the first recalled the Levites who had fled from Jerusalem, and again caused the treasuries to be prepared, and the officers appointed for the reception of the tithes; the second proclaimed that God's blessing would follow the obedience of His people.⁴ But it was hard to convince a stiff-necked and obstinate people of their sins. In the Book of

¹ Mal. ii. 13-15.

² Neh. xiii. 28, 29.

³ John iv. 20.

⁴ Neh. xiii. 10-14; Mal. iii. 8-12.

Malachi we have many instances given of the sceptical questions and of the constant objections with which they met his teaching.¹ He replies to each in turn ; but he unfolds at last the fatal condition of mind which prevented a true and lasting return to God. They were coming to believe that it was "vain to serve God," that the keeping of His ordinances was but a profitless service, and that the proud, the self-indulgent, and the defiers of God, were alone to be considered happy and prosperous.² The picture is a dreadful one, and is the true key to the understanding of the short continuance of Ezra's and Nehemiah's reforms. With such thoughts in their hearts, no outward laws as to the payment of tithes or the keeping of the Sabbath would bring men into a true covenant with God. We see the complete development of these things in the picture which the four Gospels give us of the priests, scribes, rulers and people in the time of our Lord. But the same Gospels show us also bright exceptions in holy individuals who, when the Saviour was born into the world, were "waiting for the consolation of Israel."³ In the darkest times there are ever these bright lights, and in the days of Nehemiah and Malachi, no less so than in those after days of Simeon and Anna. "They that feared the Lord," in that time, the prophet tells us, "spake often one to another : and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His Name."⁴

¹ Mal. i. 2, 6, 7, ii. 14, 17, iii. 7, 8, 13.

³ Luke ii. 25.

² Mal. iii. 14, 15.

⁴ Mal. iii. 16.

LESSON V.

FROM NEHEMIAH TO JUDAS MACCABÆUS (about B.C. 413 to B.C. 164).

AFTER the death of Nehemiah, the kings of Persia appear to have ruled Judæa through Persian, not Jewish governors. We know but little of Jerusalem or the province of Judæa during the years which followed the reforms of Nehemiah and the teaching of Malachi. The one incident recorded, the murder by one of the high priests of his brother within the Temple courts (B.C. 366), serves to show that the descendants of Eliashib had not followed the pure ideal set before them by the prophet.¹ The Persian rule continued until B.C. 332. During this period the gradual formation of the Canon of Holy Scripture must have been taking place. It has been generally believed that Ezra first collected the books of the Sacred Scriptures, distinguishing them from other and uninspired writings. But in all probability this work, though begun by Ezra, was not completed at once. The Bible "in its present shape was formed gradually during a lengthened interval, beginning with Ezra and extending through a part or even the whole of the Persian period, when the cessation of the prophetic

¹ Mal. ii. 5-7.

gift pointed out the necessity and defined the limits of the collection."¹ Here and there a later addition was made, as for instance, the continuation of the pedigree in Neh. xii., where, as we know, the Jaddua there named² was the high priest when Alexander the Great made himself master of Jerusalem, about a hundred years after Nehemiah's time. By degrees, therefore, the Jews separated the books which were inspired by God from all other compositions, and by degrees they ceased to expect the gift of prophecy to arise among them, and termed Malachi the "Seal," or last of the Prophets. That they had writings of less authority is clear. Some of the books which form what we call the Apocrypha were probably written at this time or soon after. The Book of Tobit was in all probability written while Judæa was still ruled by Persia. In it we trace the teaching of the scribes, who laid especial stress on the three duties of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving; a teaching recognized and spiritualized by our Lord in the Sermon on the Mount.³ There is, however, no evidence that the Jews ever placed the authority of these books on a level with those admitted into the Sacred Canon.

In the year B.C. 332, a most important change took place in the government of the Jews. The vision seen by Daniel in Babylon was fulfilled, the "he-goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth," and smiting the ram, "brake his two horns, and cast him down to the ground." Alexander, the Grecian conqueror, established an almost universal monarchy; and attacking the Persian Empire, brake the power of

¹ Prof. Westcott in Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, art. "Canon."
Neh. xii. 11, 22.

³ Tob. xii. 8, 9; Matt. vi. 1-18.

both the Medes and Persians, and cast down the rule of Persia for ever. Thus the second Empire, symbolized by the silver breast and arms of Nebuchadnezzar's statue, and the bear of Daniel's vision, gave place to the third Empire, the kingdom of brass, the dominion of the swift leopard, the rule of the Greeks. We are told that Alexander, when he took possession of Jerusalem, did homage to Jaddua the high priest, saying that he had seen such a priest in a vision, who had told him that he should conquer Persia. As it was the constant desire of Alexander to impress others with the belief that he was a conqueror divinely commissioned, it is highly probable that he should strive to do so when about to enter Jerusalem. On the other hand, a study of the Book of Daniel might well have prepared Jaddua to receive him as an agent appointed by God as much as Cyrus had been in earlier times. The Greek conquest of Judæa was productive of great changes to the Jews, changes which facilitated in after days the spread of Christianity, and thus affected the whole history of the world. The first of these which followed the conquest almost immediately was the removal of 100,000 Jews to the new city which the conqueror had built in Egypt, and called, after his own name, Alexandria. There were now three great settlements of Jews, those of Palestine, of Babylon, and of Egypt. From this time the Jews of the Dispersion, Jews settled in foreign countries, take a greater part in the history of the world. "A powerful hierarchy had succeeded in substituting the idea of a Church for that of a State; and the Jew was now able to wander over the world, and yet remain faithful to the God of his fathers." "The Dispersion was the out-

ward proof that a faith had succeeded to a kingdom."¹

At the death of Alexander, his empire was divided into four. The Greek rulers of Egypt and the Greek rulers of Syria possessed alternately the country of Palestine, and fought for its possession. The struggle was at length decided (B.C. 198) in favour of Antiochus the Great, king of Syria. The capital of these Greek kings of Syria was Antioch, the far-famed city founded B.C. 300, famed for its beauty and magnificence, in after years familiar to us as the starting-point of St. Paul's labours.

From Antioch the Greek kings of Syria ruled over Judæa, treating their Jewish subjects for the most part with mildness, and allowing them the exercise of their religion as freely as the kings of Persia had done. An attempt made at one time to remove treasure from the Temple was said to have been miraculously defeated without any vengeance being taken on the Jews by the Syrian power. With no foreign governor placed immediately over Jerusalem, the power and influence of the high priests must have become very great. They were not, however, for the most part, men to use this influence for any better purposes than those inspired by self-interest and the desire for power. But one name, that of Simon the Just (B.C. 300), occurs among the descendants of Joshua, the son of Josedeck, of which we can say that it was borne by one worthy of his ancestry. Of this Simon the writer of the apocryphal book Ecclesiasticus has given a splendid eulogy.² Simon's successors became

¹ Prof. Westcott in *Smith's Dictionary of the Bible*, art. "Dispersion."

² Eccclus. i.

less and less worthy of the priesthood, and at length, as rival candidates for the high office, sought to obtain the favour of the Greek kings by the adoption of Greek customs and the changing of their Hebrew names to Greek ones. Accordingly, instead of Joshua and Onias, we read of Jason and Menelaus, two unworthy brothers, who struggled together to obtain the high priest's office, striving which should outbid the other in the most servile adoption of Greek customs. They built a gymnasium at Jerusalem for the practice of the Greek games; they sent contributions to the games celebrated at Tyre in honour of Hercules; they sold the golden vessels of the Temple, and even offered to forsake their national laws and customs. The Jewish nation was never in more danger of losing its nationality and being "mingled with the heathen" than now. A sudden and terrible persecution saved it from this danger.

But out of the danger itself came one circumstance which, though at the time a sign of decay, was overruled by Providence to be a preparation for the spread of Christianity. The Jews, when they returned to Palestine, spoke no longer the old Hebrew of their fathers, but a language akin to it, called Aramaic, which they had learnt during their sojourn in Babylon. One great work of the scribes was now to explain to them their ancient Hebrew Scriptures.¹ But as the Jews had learned one new language in Babylon so their brethren in Egypt acquired another, and soon spoke neither Hebrew nor Aramaic, but Greek. It was probably for this cause that a Greek version of the Scriptures was prepared at Alexandria. This is the

¹ Neh. viii. 7, 8.

version known as the Septuagint. Marvellous stories were told by the Jews with regard to this translation, but the truth appears to be, that the version was made by degrees, the Pentateuch being translated first, the other books later, and that the use of the Greek language and want of familiarity with the Hebrew were the real causes which produced it. That it should come to be commonly used in Palestine as well as in Egypt would seem more remarkable, did we not remember the influence of the Greek kings of Syria, and the efforts made by the rival high priests to conciliate them by the introduction of Greek customs. With the Greek customs would come the Greek language, and with that a common use of the Greek version of the Scriptures. That it was commonly used we know from the fact, that far the greater number of the quotations from the Old Testament made in the Gospels or Epistles are taken from it.

The king for whose favour the rival high priests Jason and Menelaus were thus ready to sacrifice their nationality and their religion was Antiochus Epiphanes, whose name has become infamous through his persecution of the Jews and his attempt to destroy the worship of the true God.

It was in vain that Grecian customs and manners had been introduced into Jerusalem. The quarrels of the priests furnished Antiochus with an occasion for attacking the city and for plundering the Temple of its treasures, which he coveted. This was done B.C. 170. A dreadful massacre ensued; 40,000 people were put to death, many sold as slaves, and the sacred vessels of the Temple seized. After this act of cruelty, Antiochus added yet more any sign of independence in his

subject people. He resolved therefore that all who were ruled by him should henceforth have but one law and one religion. To this end he sent two years later (B.C. 168) a force against Jerusalem. Another and more dreadful massacre followed, the streets of the city ran with blood, the Temple was desecrated, and the observance of the Law forbidden. Those who attempted to circumcise their children were punished with death. All copies of the Law were burnt, and those who possessed them killed. On the Altar of Jehovah was placed an idol-altar, on which was made an offering to Jupiter Olympius. Thus did "the little horn," "the king of fierce countenance," magnify "himself, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of His (God's) sanctuary was cast down."¹ "So near was the Jewish nation and the worship of Jehovah to total extermination." "At this crisis Divine Providence interposed, not as formerly with miraculous assistance, but by the instrumentality of human virtues; the lofty patriotism, adventurous valour, daring and sagacious soldiership, generous self-devotion, and inextinguishable zeal of heroic men in the cause of their country and their God."² All these qualities were eminently displayed in one devoted family.

Mattathias, a priest of the course of Jehoiarib,³ saw with horror the profanations committed. "Our sanctuary," he said, "even our beauty and our glory is laid waste, and the Gentiles have profaned it. To what end therefore shall we live any longer?"⁴ He refused to offer idolatrous sacrifice, and fled with his

¹ Dan. viii. 9-14, 23-25.

³ 1 Chron. xxiv. 7.

² Milman's *History of the Jews*.

⁴ 1 Macc. ii. 12, 13.

five sons to the mountains. A wild guerilla warfare ensued. Many gathered themselves to Mattathias and his sons, who descended from time to time to destroy the heathen altars around, retreating again to their fastnesses. B.C. 166, Mattathias died, but he bequeathed the resistance which he had begun to his sons, setting before them the examples of their faithful fathers from Abraham to Daniel, and appointing his third son, Judas, called Maccabæus, to succeed him as conductor of the war.

It is impossible to follow here minutely the victories of the dauntless Judas, who, for the next five years (166-161), was the recognized leader of the patriots. "He gat his people great honour, and put on a breastplate as a giant, and girt his warlike harness about him, and he made battles, protecting the host with his sword. In his acts he was like a lion, and like a lion's whelp roaring for his prey." So did his countrymen describe him, and his own words not less than his deeds inspired them with courage. "Strength cometh from heaven;" "We fight for our lives and our laws."¹ Such appeals were not lost, but gave such force to those who followed him, that Judas, with fearful odds against him, was invariably victorious over the armies of the king of Syria. At Beth-horon, the scene of Joshua's great victory in the first conquest of Canaan, at Emmaus, after keeping a solemn fast at Mizpeh, and at Bethsurun, he gained signal victories, and at length entered Jerusalem, and found the ruined and defiled Temple in his hands.² The sight that greeted their eyes was a terrible one. The courts of the Temple lay desolate, and shrubs grew in them "like

¹ 1 Macc. iii. 3, 4, 19, 21.

² 1 Macc. iii. iv.

the underwood of a forest," the chambers of the priests were thrown down, the altar of burnt-offerings stood profaned, with an idolatrous shrine placed on it. The first wild lamentations over, the Jews proceeded to work. The most blameless of the priests that could be found were chosen to cleanse the sanctuary, everything that had suffered defilement was removed, even the altar itself, and a new one placed instead of it. New vessels were made for the Holy Place; and, on the anniversary of the day of its pollution three years before, a solemn feast of re-dedication was held (B.C. 164). For eight days they kept the feast, much in the same manner as they kept the Feast of Tabernacles, not without remembrance of those sad feasts which they had kept while wandering on the mountains. It was to them so great a day of joy and thanksgiving, that they ordained that it should be kept yearly for ever among the Jews. From their joy at their deliverance it was called "the Feast of Lights;" but it is under the name "Feast of Dedication," that St. John mentions it when he tells us, that our Saviour was at Jerusalem when it took place, "and it was winter," and He "walked in the Temple, in Solomon's porch."²

² John x. 22, 23.

LESSON VI.

FROM JUDAS MACCABÆUS TO JOHN THE BAPTIST.

FROM the Feast of Lights, or re-dedication of the Temple by Judas Maccabæus, we may date the commencement of the independence which the Jews enjoyed, until they, in common with all the nations around, were overshadowed by the power of the Romans. This independence was not indeed unbroken, and it was not at once that the Jews ceased to recognize the supremacy of the kings of Syria. Yet this supremacy was little more than nominal; and for the most part the Jews secured from this time a native government, which they owed first to a patriotic and noble resistance to tyranny, and afterwards to the skilful advantages taken by their leaders of the feuds between rival pretenders to the throne of Antioch.

The real rulers from this time were the family of Judas, who were called from the name of an ancestor "Asmonæans," and from the surname of Judas "Maccabees." Judas himself lived for only four years more after the dedication. This remainder of his life was spent in fighting, and maintaining the struggle he had begun. Always victorious, he was at one time recognized as governor of Judæa by the Syrians, then again attacked by them, and at last slain at Elusa (B.C.

161), fighting desperately against an immense Syrian force. His death was as heroic as his life had been ; and though for a time kept in check, the patriot party were nerved by it to a more determined resistance. ,

Jonathan, the brother of Judas, was recognized by them as their leader. By alternate victories and negotiations he gained back all that had been lost at the death of Judas, and once more established the Maccabæan power in Jerusalem. * He took at that time (B.C. 152) another step which had a great influence over the future history of the Jews, he assumed the high priesthood as well as the civil power, and was the first priest king of the Asmonæan line, though the title of king was not yet assumed. This was a great change, because the Maccabæan family, though of the tribe of Levi, and probably of the house of Eleazar, did not belong to the high-priestly family. Jonathan was not, however, the first high priest who was not descended from Joshua the son of Josedech. The true heir to the high priesthood at the death of the unworthy Menelaus was Onias, who, leaving Palestine, fled to Egypt, and there accepted the office of high priest to a new temple erected for the Jews by the king of Egypt. Onias justified this step by appealing to the words of Isaiah, predicting "an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt," † but he was looked on as a renegade by the Palestinian Jews. In his place the Syrian kings had raised to the high priesthood an adherent of their own of the stock of Aaron, who took the name of Alcimus. This man, through the rest of his life, opposed himself to the Maccabæan party. It was at his death that Jonathan

* Isa. xix. 18, 19.

became high priest. He continued the real ruler and leader of his people until B.C. 144, when, by the treachery of Tryphon, a Syrian noble, he was imprisoned and murdered.

Another of the heroic Maccabæan brothers, however, stepped forward to fill his place. Simon, the second son, had been named by his father Mattathias, "a man of counsel," who should be a father to his people.¹ He, as well as his brothers, had distinguished himself in war, and he has been termed of the five brothers "the calmest, the most discreet and prudent of them all." Under his leadership the country and people of the Jews rose to a height of prosperity and power which was far beyond any that they had enjoyed since the return from Babylon. Simon was not only recognized as high priest and prince of Judæa, but the reigning king of Syria renounced all claims to tribute from the Jews. The year in which they received this acknowledgment of their independence was reckoned the first year of "the freedom of Jerusalem."² Under Simon the Jews enjoyed a few years of peace, during which he occupied himself with the internal affairs of the kingdom. He issued a new coinage, dated from "the deliverance of Sion," and avoiding, in compliance with Jewish feeling, all figures of men, stamped the coins with the cups used for the Temple libations, the almonds of Aaron's rod, and such devices. He encouraged trade and agriculture, as Solomon and Uzziah had done in the days of the older Jewish kingdom, and strengthened the alliance with Rome first entered into by his brother Judas. Simon's reign was throughout prosperous; yet he did not escape the fate

¹ 1 Macc. ii. 65.

² 1 Macc. xiii. 41, 42.

which appeared inevitable to one of his family. The last of the five Maccabæan brothers, he died like the rest a violent death, being murdered, with his elder son, by the treachery of his son-in-law, who was governor of Jericho, and hoped to gain for himself the kingdom. In this however he was not successful, and Simon was succeeded by his son John Hyrcanus (B.C. 135).

Though hard pressed by the Syrians in the early part of his reign, Hyrcanus was at length able to throw off their yoke entirely, and reigned supreme for more than twenty years, recognized by the Romans, and secured from other enemies through their alliance. The period during which he ruled the Jews is a very interesting one, because it is a period in which we trace the full adoption of many opinions and modes of thought which long before were doubtless growing up among the people. From this time also date many institutions and many sects which we find fully established in the days of our Lord's life on earth.

The doctrine of the resurrection from the dead, though hinted at in the Psalms of David, and more clearly announced by the prophets, was taught more definitely, and helped to sustain the Jews during the suffering and persecution they had to endure. It henceforth became a cherished belief and watchword to a large section of the nation.

We have further evidence of the religious thought of the nation, in the writings which were either written at this period or a little before it. The apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus is an expression of the theology of the Palestinian Jews at this time. This work, written in Hebrew, or possibly in Aramaic, bears no trace of

the influence of the Egyptian Jews, but may be taken as representing to us what was thought and read in Jerusalem. The praise of agriculture reminds us of the peace enjoyed under Simon.¹ The ideas expressed about the nature of God conform strictly to those of Moses, but the experiences of later years, and the study of the prophets, had induced a belief in the extension of the Divine mercy to all mankind.² The writer does not claim to speak in the power and spirit of a prophet, but he echoes again the words of Malachi, with hope for the future, when he recounts the history of Elijah.³ With these hopes for the future mingle strong national animosities. We may instance the words in which the writer speaks of the Samaritans as "the foolish people that dwell in Sichem."⁴

This animosity achieved a signal triumph during the reign of Hyrcanus. The Samaritans, as we have seen, were undoubtedly not a Jewish people, but the descendants of settlers sent to occupy the land of Israel from Assyria.⁵ Repulsed on this account by Zerubbabel (Ezra iv. 3), when they offered to help the Jews to rebuild the Temple, they from that time became their bitterest enemies. The renegade priest chased away by Nehemiah⁶ established for them a rival temple on Mount Gerizim, above their metropolis of Shechem, or Sychar, and procured for them a copy of the Law. The Jews denounced their worship as idolatrous, their copy of the Law as spurious. The Samaritans in turn annoyed the Jews in every possible manner, waylaying pilgrims to

¹ Ecclus. vii. 15.

³ Mal. iv. 5, 6; Ecclus. xlviii. 10.

⁵ 2 Kings xvii. 24-41.

² Ecclus. xviii. 12-13.

⁴ Ecclus. i. 25, 26.

⁶ See page 35.

Jerusalem, and lighting false beacon fires, when the Jews sought by signals to make their brethren in Babylon share with them the Feast of the Passover. During the reign of Hyrcanus the Jews gained the upper hand. Hyrcanus captured Sychem, threw down the temple on Mount Gerizim, and at a later period utterly destroyed the city of Samaria itself. The Samaritans, however, continued to worship towards the mountain on which their temple had stood, and the bitterness of feeling continued between the two peoples, as we learn from the notices of it in the Gospels.¹

Hyrcanus also turned his arms successfully against the Idumæans or Edomites, who had taken possession of the south of Palestine, and compelled them to receive circumcision and to conform to the Jewish law. The Idumæans became thus identified with their conquerors, and before long an Idumæan family attained to the supreme power in Palestine.

It is to the times of John Hyrcanus that we must refer the composition of the first Book of Maccabees. This history is our best authority for the Maccabæan struggle, and is evidently trustworthy and candid. The poetical beauty of the narrative renders it worthy of its noble theme. It is the work of a Jew of Palestine, and was originally written in Hebrew; it is brought down to the times of Hyrcanus;² but, it has been truly said, "it would have been almost impossible to write a history so full of simple faith and joyous triumph in the midst of the troubles which, early in the succeeding reign, threatened too distinctly the coming dissolution of the state."

It is in this book that we find mention of the

¹ See Luke ix. 53; John iv. 9.

² 1 Macc. xvi. 23, 24.

"Assidæans," or "the righteous," who are spoken of as zealous adherents of the Maccabees. They were no doubt at first distinguished chiefly for their adherence to national customs and opposition to Grecian influence. With their love of all that was national, blended a belief that the traditions, with regard to religion, held among the Jews were of equal authority with the Law; they affirmed indeed, at a later time, that these had been delivered to Moses on Mount Sinai, and handed down by word of mouth. These traditions they gradually added to, until they became burdensome rules, affecting the most trivial affairs of daily life. The "righteous ones" were doubtless brave assistants in time of war; but they became in times of peace bigots, who would tolerate none but those who were identical with themselves in thought and customs. Under their later name of "Pharisees," "the separated ones," they are well known to us in the Gospel history. The Pharisees were undoubtedly the most popular sect in Palestine, but they were not the only one. A much smaller sect, the Sadducees, composed probably for the most part of the high-priestly family and their adherents, denied the authority of the traditions so dear to the Pharisee, and proclaimed the authority of the Law as greater than even that of the prophets.

To the people throughout Palestine the knowledge of the prophets, and reverence for both the Law and the prophets, was secured by what may be termed the "parochial system" of the Jews. SYNAGOGUES may have been established here and there before, but it is from the time of Hyrcanus that we must date their existence in every town or village. Here "the prophets," as well as "Moses," were read "every

sabbath day ;”² here fixed forms of prayer were used ; and the influence of the synagogues undoubtedly aided the complete disappearance of idolatry after the Captivity. They probably tended to diminish the influence of the hereditary priesthood, whose ministrations were not required in the synagogue as in the Temple, and in so doing they prepared the way for the great High Priest Who was to arise after the order of Melchisedec, when that of the sons of Aaron was about to pass away.

The last years of John Hyrcanus (who died B.C. 109), and the reigns of his sons, were troubled by the discords which broke out with ever increasing fury between the Pharisees and Sadducees. The Asmonæan princes soon degenerated from their heroic forefathers.¹ They became weak and self-seeking, more often turning their arms against each other than against the common foe. At length the feeble Hyrcanus II., grandson to John Hyrcanus, fell completely into the power and control of Antipater, an Idumæan of great courage and cunning, both of which qualities distinguished his family. The quarrels of the weak Hyrcanus and his brother caused at length the armed interference of the Romans. Pompeius, their general, besieged and took Jerusalem, entered the Temple, and penetrating, to the horror of the Jews, even into the Holy of Holies, expressed his astonishment at the absence of any statue or representation of a deity. From this time the Roman power continued really supreme, and though Judæa was not yet termed a province of Rome, none could rule there without the permission of the Mistress of the world. “The fourth

² Acts xv. 21.

kingdom" of Daniel, "diverse from all kingdoms," which should "devour the whole earth,"¹ from this time made its presence felt. From this time, too, Judæa and its affairs became known to the Roman world; and the captives taken to Rome to swell the triumph of Pompeius formed the first members of that colony of Jews which St. Paul found established in the Eternal City.²

The Idumæan Antipater and his family, who had contrived to ingratiate themselves with the Romans, reaped the greatest advantage from this change in Jewish affairs. While he lived Antipater retained his power. After his death, his son Herod, having allied himself with the Asmonæan princes by his marriage with Mariamne, the granddaughter of Hyrcanus II., was raised to the throne by Roman influence (B.C. 40). Herod the Great was the last independent sovereign of Judæa. The crimes of this man were only equalled by his extraordinary talents. The many murders committed by him included those of all the members (with two exceptions) of the Sanhedrim, or great council of the Jews, which had ventured once to arraign him before them. To these may be added the murders of his beautiful wife Mariamne and of almost all her relations, and those of his own sons; his treatment of these caused the remark of the Roman Emperor, that "he would rather be Herod's swine than his sons." The career of blood was only closed by the massacre of those infants at Bethlehem, who died unconsciously for their Lord, and whom the Church has always known as "Holy Innocents." But if Herod was distinguished for his crimes, he was so also for the extra-

¹ Dan. vii. 23.

² Acts xxviii. 17-29.

ordinary cunning and dexterity with which he maintained his position in the face of great difficulties, and insinuated himself into the favour of the many individuals who rose to power in this changeful period. He secured to the Jews a lingering independence; but, Idumæan at heart as well as by birth, he rebuilt the temple of Samaria as well as that at Jerusalem. This last was done with great magnificence, but with care that it should appear to be a restoration of that of Zerubbabel rather than a new building. The additions to it, made after his death, were not yet completed when the disciples showed their Master the stones collected for the work.¹ But the splendour of the renewed Temple could hardly have deceived the Jews as to the absence of true religion in Herod. The party who supported his half foreign dominion, and that of his successors, were distinguished from their compatriots by the name of Herodians.²

Governed thus by an Idumæan family, overshadowed by the power of Rome, divided into sects filled with hatred for each other, and influenced by a succession of high priests utterly unworthy of their office, the Jewish people were at length, and for the first time since the days of Malachi, startled by the voice of a true prophet speaking among them. The "Messenger of the Covenant"³ came; Elias "which was for to come" appeared; and in the wilderness the voice cried, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord."⁴

¹ Mark xiii. 1.

² Mark xii. 13.

³ Mal. iii. 1.

⁴ Mal. iii. 1, iv. 5, 6; Matt. xi. 14; Isa. xl. 3.

LESSON VII.

THE EARLY MESSIANIC PROPHECIES.

WE shall devote our last six Lessons to the Messianic teaching of the earlier books of the Old Testament, together with that of the Temple worship and of the Prophets. That of the Psalms has already been noted in the fourth part of this Manual.

1. *The first promise of a Messiah* was given, as we have seen, to Eve immediately after the Fall. Its obscurity misled her, not improbably, into supposing that its fulfilment was at hand when Cain was born. Yet on one point the promise, or prophecy, whichever we regard it, was very clear. The first great law of Redemption—"the making perfect through suffering"—was distinctly laid down. The Saviour must suffer, if He is to overcome. "And the LORD God said unto the serpent, . . . I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed : IT shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel."¹

2. *The blessings of Shem and Japheth.* When the human race made, as it were, a fresh start after the Deluge, in the family of Noah, it was perhaps to be expected that there should be at least some new inti-

¹ Gen. iii. 15.

mation given of the line of the Promised Seed. Such appears to have been the blessing of Shem by Noah. "Blessed be Jehovah God of Shem."¹ With Shem should be the knowledge of the true God; in him, therefore, from whom according to the flesh Christ came, there lay hidden a blessing for all nations. To him Japheth, enlarged as to worldly power and knowledge, should come to be taught about Jehovah. The outlines of all subsequent history are drawn in Noah's words. Though there is as yet no advance in the *idea* of the Messiah's office and work, yet the family of mankind from whom He should spring is dimly suggested.

3. *The promise to Abraham.* With the call of Abraham the history of the Church receives a third and fresh impulse. (a) And first, in the promise of a universal blessing to descend upon mankind through his seed, Abraham was assured that he should be the progenitor of the promised Saviour; whilst in the fact that the descent should be through a son born according to promise, there was foreshadowed the wonderful birth of Jesus Christ. But (b) the idea of a suffering Messiah was developed. Abraham's call to leave his father's home and his native country may well have prepared him for this thought. The separation must have been painful, snapping as it did those ties of kindred which all men hold dear. In the long and often trying life of sojourning in a strange land the idea must have been strengthened. In the thought of a heavenly city, when the nomad life should end and the promises of God be fulfilled, there was a foreshadowing, albeit a faint one, of the career of Him

¹ Gen. ix. 26.

Who for the joy set before Him should endure the cross, despising its shame. Even in the promise, "I will curse him that curseth thee," there was wrapped up the thought of suffering, of righteousness persecuted by unrighteousness; and in the mocking of Ishmael this same contest between truth and falsehood was typified and set forth. But (c), above all, not only was the suffering of the promised Saviour typified, but the very manner of it most distinctly foreshadowed, by the sacrifice of Isaac. There must be the shedding of blood—the giving up of a life, nay more, a conquest over death; for Abraham received Isaac again, as in a figure, from the grave.

That Abraham seized hold of the meaning of his own life and of Isaac's is abundantly clear from what our Lord says.¹ Abraham did see in it all Jesus Christ, and he rejoiced in the sight. He recognized a Divine purpose in all that happened to him, and through the long centuries that were first to roll by, He saw the Day of Christ, and the completed victory over death and sin.

4. *Jacob's blessing of Judah.*² This blessing has been from the earliest Christian times, and even earlier amongst the Jews, regarded as prophetic of the Messiah. As Isaac and Jacob had been specially designated as His progenitors, so now Jacob on his deathbed signifies in which of his sons the Messianic line should be continued.

The prophecy, though sketching in rough outline something of the actual future history of the tribe of Judah, with its long line of kings, and its capital city, the centre of Jewish hopes and longings, is in reality

¹ John viii. 56; Heb. xi. 13.

² Gen. xlix. 8-10.

full of deep spiritual truth. The hand upon the neck of the enemies, and the father's children bowing down before him, represent not only the victories of Jesus Christ over His and our spiritual foes, and our worship and adoration of Him, but they anticipate as well the prophecy of Isaiah,¹ the coming of the nations to Judah for spiritual food :—"Surely God is in thee, and there is no God else."

In the designation of Judah as a lion our thoughts are carried on to St. John's description in Rev. v. 5: "And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed." And when the Apostle looked, He saw no lion, but a Lamb standing in the midst of the elders. The warlike characteristics are obscured by the peaceful ones. So it is in Jacob's prophecy. The central thought of the whole blessing is the continuance of the sceptre in Judah until Shiloh come—the man of rest and peace, that is, the peaceful One. We lose the whole beauty of this passage if we regard the sceptre as simply an emblem of earthly power and sovereignty. It is rather a prophecy that the knowledge of the true God should remain with Judah for an appointed time. If a Queen of Sheba or an eunuch of Ethiopia want to hear of Divine truth, they must go to Jerusalem. If a Naaman is healed, or a Nebuchadnezzar humbled, it is that they may acknowledge the God of Israel. But when Shiloh comes, Who is the Prince of Peace, the One speaking peace, and Who leaves His peace with His disciples, the sceptre is no longer Judah's exclusive possession. All nations share in the knowledge of Jehovah, although

¹ Isa. xlv. 14.

even now it is to Judah's Lion they gather, for security, rest and peace.¹

5. *Balaam's prophecy.*² Balaam appears to have taken his figure of the sceptre in this prophecy from Jacob's blessing. His words attained a very clear and literal fulfilment in David's victories over Moab and surrounding nations. But it had a far higher spiritual fulfilment. Balaam's star of Jacob carries us on in thought to the star of Bethlehem, the guide of the Magi to the birthplace of Jesus Christ, and speaks to us of "the True Light Which lighteth every man which cometh into the world." The Sceptre speaks as before of spiritual dominion ; and, as in later prophecies, so here, Moab and other nations stand for the spiritual enemies of the truth—for those who in all time shall set themselves as opponents of Jesus Christ, but who shall in the end be smitten and overcome.

6. *Moses' promise of a prophet.*³ The words of the great Lawgiver distinctly require (a) that the Prophet of Whom he speaks should be some single Person ; (b) that this Person should exercise an office akin to that which Moses had exercised, the office of leader and legislator, Who should speak to God face to face ; and (c) that He should appear at some great crisis in the world's spiritual history, when there was strong need for a renewed call to righteousness.

All these requirements are fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

¹ There seems no doubt that we are to understand "Shiloh" as a proper name of the promised Messiah,—the first one of prophecy. Nor can we wonder that the Israelites should, in remembrance of Jacob's words, name the first home of their national sanctuary "Shiloh," or the place of rest, when the toils of conquest were over. How deeply their great ancestor's words sank into the national heart we see from Isa. ix. 6, xxxiii. 22 ; Ps. lxxii.

² Numb. xxiv. 17-19.

³ Deut. xviii. 15-19.

No prophet of the Old Testament fulfils them. Nor does the prophetic order, taken as a whole, fulfil them. For neither of the whole body, nor yet of any single prophet could it be truly said that one like unto Moses had been raised up.¹

Yet the "Spirit of Christ" spoke² in all the prophets. They were but precursors of Him, and therefore in some limited sense each true prophet of Jehovah may be said to have offered a fulfilment of Moses' promise.³

The New Testament shows us that the general sense of the Jewish people understood the promise of Moses of the Messiah. Philip, in announcing to Nathanael that he had found Him of Whom Moses in the Law did write, evidently had this passage in his mind.⁴ So had the people when, after the feeding of the five thousand, they exclaimed, "This is of a truth the Prophet that should come into the world."⁵ So had those who, when Jesus spoke of the living water, were convinced that He was the Prophet.⁶ And again, when St. Peter, at Solomon's Porch, and St. Stephen, just before his martyrdom, quoted the very words of Moses, and applied them to Jesus, they appealed in reality to the recognized and well-known interpretation of the words.⁷

Again, when our Lord says to the Jews that Moses wrote of Him,⁸ He seems manifestly to refer to this prophecy; and if we compare Deut. xviii. 18, 19, "I will put My words into His Mouth; and . . . whosoever will not hearken unto My words which He

¹ Deut. xxxiv. 10. See also Numb. xii. 6-8.

² 1 Pet. i. 11.

³ That Moses did make some reference to the order of the prophets seems clearly shown by vv. 20-22 of Deut. xviii.

⁴ John i. 45.

⁵ John vi. 14.

⁶ John vii. 40.

⁷ Acts iii. 22, vii. 37.

⁸ John v. 46.

shall speak in My Name, I will require it of him," with John v. 38-43, "Ye have not His word abiding in you: for whom He hath sent, Him ye believe not; . . . I am come in My Father's Name, and ye receive Me not," we see in what our Lord says a plain reference to Moses' words.¹

7. *The Angel of the LORD.* This designation of some Person, who appeared to Hagar, Abraham, and others, occurs frequently in the Pentateuch, and in other parts of the Old Testament. This Angel of the LORD speaks of Himself as if He were God. Thus to Hagar He says, "I will multiply thy seed exceedingly;"² to Abraham, "I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from Me;"³ and to Jacob He says, "I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar."⁴ We may apply the same principle of interpretation to the other instances recorded.⁵ Hence it has been the constant belief of the Church that this Angel of the LORD was none other than the Son of God, the Divine Word, the Second Person of the Ever-blessed Trinity. Those to whom this Angel appeared felt convinced that they had seen God. We cannot, however, regard this title as strictly prophetic. Nevertheless, to the more spiritually-minded Israelites it may well have brought the new and further conviction that the Promised Messiah was not simply to be an earthly deliverer, but a heavenly; not only, though most truly, a descendant of Abraham, but also the Son of God; not man only, but God also.

¹ We should note also that the contrast drawn in Heb. iii. 1-6 is not between our Lord and one of the prophets, but between Him and Moses.

² Gen. xvi. 10.

³ Gen. xxii. 11, 12.

⁴ Gen. xxxi. 13.

⁵ The chief of these are: Numb. xxii. 23-35; Judges ii. 1-4, vi. 11-27, xiii. 2-22.

LESSON VIII.

MESSIANIC TEACHING OF THE THREE GREAT FESTIVALS.

IN addition to the smaller and less important festivals, such as the new moons and the sabbaths, there were three great festivals appointed by God, which were invested with peculiar solemnities, and of which a special observance was required. These were the Feast of the Passover, the Feast of Harvest or of Weeks, and the Feast of Tabernacles or of the Ingathering. On these three great feasts every grown man in Israel was required to go up to the place of the national Sanctuary, there to make his offering unto the Lord. The object of this rule is very evident. It was intended to guard against two great dangers to which the Israelites were liable :—(1) the lapsing into idolatry, and (2) the loss of national life. Very prone to copy the nations around them, they were continually ready to forget the Lord their God Who had done so great things for them ; and divided as they were into twelve tribes, different and sometimes conflicting interests would be likely to arise, tending constantly to the disintegration of the people as a nation. By the regulations made regarding these three Festivals, both these dangers were guarded against, and would pro-

bably have been altogether avoided, had the Festivals been observed as God intended that they should be. Had the whole nation assembled three times a year in the place which Jehovah chose "to put His Name there," full of devotion and loyalty to their Great Divine King, we can scarcely suppose that they could have lapsed into the miserable idolatries to which they fell away, or have so entirely lost the feeling of being one people as to be unwilling to assist one another against a common foe.

The Passover.

The chief passages bearing on this feast are—Exod. xii. xiii. 3-10, xxi. 14-19, xxxiv. 18-26; Lev. xxiii. 4-14; Numb. ix. 1-14, xxviii. 16-25; Deut. xvi. 1-6.

The first and chiefest of these festivals, and the one most full of significance to us Christians, was the Feast of the Passover, or, as it was also called, the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It was instituted before the Law was given, and was first observed on the night of departure from Egypt. It was to be an ordinance for ever to keep in memory their wonderful deliverance, when "the Lord passed over the houses of the children of Israel in the land of Egypt," and a new nation, as it were, was born into the world.

The feast commenced on the 14th day of the month Nisan with the sacrifice of the Paschal Lamb, the Lamb of "the passing over." The next day was a special sabbath, a day of holy convocation, and on the 16th the first sheaf of corn from the barley harvest was offered. Special sacrifices were ordained for each day during the feast, which was to last seven days, and to

be concluded on the seventh day with an holy convocation, when no servile work was to be done.¹

The essential feature of the feast was the sacrifice of the Paschal Lamb. It is styled emphatically "the Lord's Sacrifice," "My Sacrifice;" and around it gathered the chief symbolical and typical teaching of the ordinance. In the rule that not a bone of the animal was to be broken, the Hebrews were taught that their strength lay in preserving the unity of their nation, and the Gospel teaches us that it typified the union of all Christians in our Lord Jesus Christ.² He is the true Passover, the Lamb of God, without blemish and without spot, Who was slain for us, Whose "precious blood" has redeemed and delivered us from the bondage of sin.

Moreover, as the Paschal Lamb was a continual witness to the Israelites of their deliverance from bondage, and of the many blessings accompanying it, so the sacrifice of JESUS CHRIST on the cross is a constant witness to us Christians of the infinite blessings wrought by His death.³ And as to the Israelites the

¹ These observances were not all possible at the first Passover in Egypt, and some rules made then were modified afterwards to suit the altered condition of things. Thus at the Passover in Egypt there was (1) no day of holy convocation: (2) no sheaf of corn; (3) no special sacrifices each day of the feast. Afterwards the animals were to be slain at the national Sanctuary, and the blood to be sprinkled not on the lintels and door-posts, but on the altar. At the first Passover all were to partake, men and women; afterwards it was optional with women. The order "not to go out of the house until the morning," is said only to have been observed in Egypt.

² John xix. 36.

³ 1 Cor. v. 7, 8. In addition to the thought of the perennial feast, the daily spiritual rejoicing of the Christian in contemplating the blessings of Christ's Death, the choice of this passage as part of the special anthem on Easter Day, suggests to us the connection between the eating and drinking of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Holy Communion, and

roasted lamb was the outward sign of the grace which had been given, and the mercy which had been shown them, so to the Christian the bread and the wine, in the Lord's Supper, are the outward signs of the inward spiritual grace given unto him through communion with His Divine Lord.¹

A second ordinance of the Passover Feast was the very strict one, that during it only unleavened bread was to be eaten. Here again the ruling idea seems to be, that leaven symbolizes the pride and vanity which puff up and corrupt the heart; whereas unleavened bread is the fit emblem of a lowly contrite spirit. St. Paul saw this truth, and pointed it out to the Corinthians, when he exhorted them to "keep the feast not with the old leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."²

The offering of the first sheaf of new corn on the 16th day of Nisan was intended as an expression of thankfulness for the harvest just commenced. But it also symbolized to the Jews the dedication of the first-born to God, and the Apostles St. Paul and St. John teach us that it typified the resurrection of Jesus Christ, "the first-fruits of them that slept," "the first-begotten of the dead."³

There grew up as time went on certain customs or observances at the feast, which seem to be referred to in the New Testament. Such were the drinking four cups of wine at stated intervals during the paschal

the eating of the Paschal lamb by the Israelites. See further Bishop Andrewes' Sermon vii. on The Resurrection.

¹ 1 Cor. x. 16-18; Exod. xix. 5, 6; 1 Pet. ii. 9.

² 1 Cor. v. 8. See further Mr. Clark's art. on "The Passover" in the *Dictionary of the Bible*.

³ 1 Cor. xv. 20; Col. i. 18; Rev. i. 5.

meal, of which two are supposed to be alluded to in St. Luke (xxii. 17-20);¹ and the singing the hymn or Hallel at the end of the feast.² The bitter herbs appear to have been made into sauce, into which the bread and meat were dipped;³ and the rule that no one should go out of the door of his house until the morning (Exod. xii. 22) was probably not observed in later times.⁴

The whole teaching of the festival as a type seems to be this; that as the Israelites were preserved in Egypt, and in the wilderness, and at last, after their long wanderings, entered the Promised Land, and first ate of its corn when they kept the Passover immediately after passing the Jordan, so the disciple of Jesus Christ, by faith in his Divine Lord, in His sacrifice, death, and resurrection, looks onward through the wilderness of this life to the "passing through the waters" of death, and to the entrance into the Heavenly Country, there to enjoy, as his real food, the Presence of God.

The Feast of Pentecost.

The chief passages bearing on this Feast are—Exod. xxiii. 16; Lev. xxiii. 15-22; Numb. xxviii. 26-31; Deut. xvi. 9-12.

The Feast of Harvest or of Weeks, or, as it came to be called in after times when the Greek language became common, the Feast of Pentecost, was the second great Hebrew festival. Unlike the other two, it was limited to one day, the fiftieth after the day on which the Paschal

¹ See also 1 Cor. x. 16; Ps. cxvi. 13.

² Isa. xxx. 29; Matt. xxvi. 30; Mark xiv. 26.

³ Matt. xxvi. 23; John xiii. 26.

⁴ Matt. xxvi. 30; Mark xiv. 26; John xiv. 31.

sheaf was offered. Its object was to praise and thank God for the harvest, on which a blessing had been sought by the offering of the first sheaf of barley at the Passover. The peculiar feature of the feast was the offering of two loaves of wheaten flour leavened. These, because they were leavened, could not be offered upon the altar. They were simply waved before the Lord, and then given to the priests. Thus the most useful of the earth's fruits was presented to God in the form in which it is used for the support of life. And in this, as it is thought, is the true meaning of the injunction.² But the leavened loaves may remind the Christian of our Lord's teaching in the parable of the woman hiding leaven in three measures of meal, and of that working of the Holy Spirit in men's hearts which produced such glorious fruits on that great Day of Pentecost, when the "cloven tongues like as of fire sat upon the disciples, and they began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance." The Feast of the Harvest, "when the valleys stand so thick with corn that they laugh and sing," when "the Lord's hand is opened, and the desire of every living thing satisfied," was indeed a fitting day on which to shed abroad the gifts of the Spirit, and to gather in the first-fruits of the spiritual harvest.

The gathered-in harvest and the loaves baked from the new corn were the type moreover of the work of Jesus Christ, receiving its crown and accomplishment in the descent of the Holy Ghost. This also had been prefigured before Mount Sinai. The Feast of Pentecost synchronized with the Giving of the Law, which was the true completion of the work begun in the De-

² See art. "Pentecost" in *D. of B.* and *Speaker's Comm.* on Lev. xxiii. 17; also Bp. Wordsworth's commentary on same passage.

liverance from Egypt. The Law indeed was the great spiritual gift of God to the Jewish Church. The Pentecostal feast was in a manner dependent upon the Passover which had gone before. So the pouring out of the Holy Ghost must be traced back to the suffering and death, resurrection and ascension, of Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Feast of Tabernacles.

The chief passages bearing on this Feast are—Exod. xxiii. 16; Lev. xxiii. 34-36, 39-43; Numb. xxix. 12-38; Deut. xvi. 13-15.

This was the third and last of the three great festivals. It was the feast of the ingathering, the "harvest home" of the Israelites, when the olives and the vines had yielded their fruits as well as the corn. During the seven days of its observance the people dwelt in booths or tents made of the boughs of thick-foliaged trees, and erected upon the house-tops, in the courts of the Temple, and in some of the main streets of the city.¹ This erection of booths was omitted after Joshua's time, but restored by Ezra after an interval of nearly 1000 years. The intention of the feast was twofold;—first, to remind the Israelites, when they had become a settled people, of their nomadic life in the wilderness, and of God's mercy to them there; and second, to call forth a spirit of thankfulness to God, Who had "made their garners full and plenteous with all manner of store." During the continuance of the feast, which was remarkable for the number of sacrifices offered, the Law was publicly read on each day.² Then, on the eighth day, when the people had returned

¹ Neh. viii. 16.

² Deut. xxx. 10-13; Neh. viii. 18.

to their houses, a Sabbath was kept, a holy convocation and a solemn assembly. It is said to have been the most popular of their feasts with the Jews. It does not seem to have had any special bearing upon Christian doctrine, but our Lord is recorded to have gone up to Jerusalem on one occasion to keep this feast,¹ and it is supposed that in His teaching He alluded to two of its customs. These were the bringing of water from the Pool of Siloam, and pouring it into a silver font or bowl, which stood near the altar, and the lighting up at night the court of the women with two great golden candelabra. To the one custom Jesus is thought to have alluded, when on the last and great day of the feast, probably the eighth, He cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink,"² and to the other, when He said, "I am the Light of the world."³ He would divert their minds from dwelling in and trusting upon outward symbols, and lift them up to faith in Him, as He Who could alone supply the Bread of Life and the Water of Life freely, and in Whose Presence alone is there no need of the light of the sun.

¹ John vii. 2, 14.² John vii. 37.³ John viii. 12.

LESSON IX.

MESSIANIC TEACHING OF THE TABERNACLE AND ITS SERVICES.

SOON after the Israelites arrived in the wilderness of Sinai, God manifested His presence on the mount and gave the people through Moses the first great group of laws contained in Exod. xix.-xxiii. Then a solemn covenant was made (xxiv.) and Moses again called up into the mount, where a vision of God's glory was vouchsafed to him. During the forty days and nights that he was in the mount, Moses received from God the pattern of the tabernacle and the ark, and the rules for the consecration of Aaron and his sons to the priesthood.

The tabernacle, with the ark and the mercy-seat which it covered, was the symbol to the Israelites of Jehovah's constant presence with them, and the witness to them, amid the heathen nations by whom they were surrounded, of the Unity of God. It was so constructed, that it could be easily taken down, and removed from place to place, and so accompany the people in their journeys. It was emphatically the tent or tabernacle of "meeting,"¹ because there the people met God. There Moses went to receive instructions

¹ Not "of the congregation," as in our Authorized Version. It was not the place where the people met one another, but where they met God.

from God ; there Miriam and Aaron were summoned when they made a sedition against Moses,¹ and there "the people drew near and stood before the Lord."² There in front of the tabernacle stood the altar, upon which the priests offered the sin-offerings and the burnt-offerings for themselves and the people. Within the tabernacle there were two divisions, called respectively the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. These were separated by a veil, symbolical of the separation for a time between the Jew and the Gentile, but which was done away in Christ, at Whose death the symbolical veil was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. Within these two parts of the tabernacle were placed certain of the most precious things belonging to the Hebrew worship,³ and into the Holy of Holies no one ever went, except the High Priest once every year, on the Great Day of Atonement, when he carried there the blood of the sacrifice, offering it for himself and for the sins of the people.

Now the Epistle to the Hebrews teaches us that this tabernacle, and all belonging to it, was a figure or type for the then present time, of what was to be after when Jesus Christ should come. And the sacrifices also were typical of Jesus Christ's sacrifice of Himself on the Cross. Let us try to understand a little more about them.

The New Testament teaches us that all sacrifices which were offered to God before the coming of Jesus Christ were really a looking forward to His one great sacrifice. They expressed the yearnings of men's hearts after reconciliation with God, and their faith in the ultimate fulfilment of God's promise that the Seed

¹ Numb. xii. 4.² Lev. ix. 5.³ Heb. ix. 2-5.

of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. It was not however till Jesus Christ came that the full meaning of all that had gone before was seen and understood.

The sacrifices offered under the law of Moses were of three kinds :—

- (i.) { Sin-offerings.
Trespass-offerings.
- (ii.) Burnt-offerings.
- (iii.) { Meat-offerings (unbloody, flour, oil, &c.)
Peace-offerings (bloody).

Now these three kinds of sacrifice represented three distinct ideas.

The first, the *sin* or *trespass-offering*, represented atonement for sin, as though the sin of the offerer was in some mysterious manner transferred to the victim offered. There could under the Law be no remission of sin without the shedding of blood. This was to teach man that sin was a disease of which the repentance of the sinner, though a necessary thing, could not rid him. However earnest and good a man might be, he could not obey God's law perfectly, and therefore the Sacred Scriptures teach us that neither the goodness nor the earnestness could put away his sin. All the sin-offerings under the Law declared plainly that man is unclean, sinful, from his very birth. Hence there must be some means of doing away with this taint of man's nature, and consequent inability to do God's will perfectly. God ordained that this should be effected by a Divine sacrifice in the fulness of time. When made and accepted this sacrifice would establish a new relation between God and man. Meantime the sin-offering under the Law only set this forth, typified it. It availed to remove

ceremonial defilement—that which separated the Israelite from the Sanctuary ; but the sin of the conscience, which separated man from God, it could not remove. That could only be expiated by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ upon the Cross. “ He suffered, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.” The sin-offering therefore represented the expiation or atonement for sin wrought by the Death of Jesus Christ.

The second kind of offerings were *burnt-offerings*, and these represented the surrender of the offerer's will to God's will. Of this kind were the sacrifices of the Patriarchs ; but when the Law came, bringing with it the knowledge of sin, the burnt-offering might not be offered until after the sin-offering had been made. No other sacrifice would be accepted by God until atonement for sin had been made. This done, the offerer must be ready to submit himself entirely to God ; and this readiness was testified by the burnt-offering. The only perfect example of this submission to God's will, and of entire obedience, is our Lord Jesus Christ. He surrendered His human will entirely and wholly to the will of His heavenly Father. So that the burnt-offering of the pious Israelite was a type and shadow of the “ perfect sinless obedience and self-dedication to God ” of Jesus Christ. And if so, it also represented the obedience of all Christ's disciples to God ; and obedience means on our part repentance and sorrow for sin going before. This is precisely what we are taught in our Catechism. For all who have been baptized, and thus brought into covenant with God, through Jesus Christ, “ the Mediator,” are required, as a condition of their reaping the benefit of the covenant, to repent of their sins, to have faith in God's mercy through Christ, and

to obey God's Holy Will and Commandments. In the same manner also the Apostle exhorts us "to present ourselves to God, a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto Him."

The third kind of offering was the *peace-offering*. It was the thanksgiving of a thankful heart. For of it, "part God had, and part the offerer ate, in sign of perfect peace and reconciliation."¹ Of the peace-offering only might the offerer himself partake. He was allowed to eat by far the larger part with his family and friends. Hence the offerer communicated, as it were, with God, by eating part of that which had been offered to Him, and with his fellow-men, by sharing his portion of the offering with them. The peace-offering thus becomes to us a very exact type and representation of the Holy Communion. For Jesus Christ, Who "made peace by the Blood of the Cross,"² is our true peace-offering. Only in Him can we have peace with God. And in the Holy Communion we are invited to feed on Jesus Christ. It is the Communion of His Body and Blood ;³ in it, we not only pray "that our sinful bodies may be made clean by His Body, and our souls washed through His most precious Blood," but that "we may evermore dwell in Him, and He in us." We eat then our Peace-offering, and thus have communion with God in Jesus Christ our Lord. Moreover, as the Israelite offerer called upon his friends to share with him in the joyful meal, and thus be animated by the same spirit as himself, so we Christians have in the Holy Communion, as partakers of the same Body and Blood, communion one with another, and are animated by the sense of a

¹ Bishop Andrewes.

² Col. i. 20.

³ 1 Cor. x. 16.

common bond, the possession of the grace of the Holy Spirit. The Mosaic peace-offering therefore teaches us one other lesson. It was the last of the sacrifices offered, always coming after the other two, and yet equally necessary, equally commanded. Without it, the whole idea of the sacrifice would have been incomplete. So it is with the Christian. Christ has died for us ungodly; He has set us an example of perfect obedience; He is our peace-offering. But we do not accept Him as this last unless we have Communion with Him in the Lord's Supper. Unless we do this our whole life as Christians is deprived of what should be its true joy and crown. Let this be laid to heart by those who are about to be confirmed.

To sum up then;—the three kinds of Mosaic sacrifice represented and typified—

- (1.) The expiation or atonement for sin wrought by Jesus Christ in His death upon the Cross.
- (2.) The perfect obedience and surrender of His Human will to the will of His Heavenly Father, and the consequent surrender required of us of our wills to God's will.
- (3.) The Communion of Christians with God and with one another through the true Peace-offering Jesus Christ.

Thus we see very clearly how our Blessed Lord united in Himself every kind of sacrifice. No one sacrifice under the Mosaic Law could have done this. Hence three were necessary. But they all pointed to the same end; they were all a shadow of the Good Thing which was to come.

This lesson would be incomplete without a reference specially to the observances of the *Great Day of*

Atonement. The observances of that day are full of meaning, "On the day appointed for this general expiation, the priest is commanded to offer a bullock and a goat, as sin-offerings, the one for himself and the other for the people; and, having sprinkled the blood of these in due form before the mercy-seat, to lead forth a second goat, denominated the scape-goat, and after laying both his hands upon the head of the scape-goat, and confessing over him all the iniquities of the people, to put them upon the head of the goat, and to send the animal, thus bearing the sins of the people, away into the wilderness."¹

This act of the high priest was to be repeated every year on the same day. The repetition, as in the case of the daily and other sacrifices, pointed clearly to the incompleteness and insufficiency of what was offered. It pointed to a complete and all-sufficient sacrifice to come, of which itself was merely a type or shadow. It typified the offering of Jesus Christ. He died for our sins, and rose again for our justification. But one goat could not convey both these ideas. Hence there must be two; one to denote the sacrifice made for sin, and the other to shadow forth its being transferred and carried away from the sinner. Thus the second goat was not a separate observance, but a distinct part of the same sacrifice. Moreover the high priest, on this one day in the whole year, entered the "Most Holy Place," carrying with him the blood of the bullock, and of the slain ram, and the smoking incense, typical of the offering of Christ's prayer for His people. Thus the whole observance was typical of Jesus Christ, Who "by one offering hath perfected for ever them

¹ See Lev. xvi.

that are sanctified." He has no need to offer often, as the high priest; for as our High Priest He has entered in once for all into the holy place, ever living to make intercession by His own blood for the sins of the world.

Some of the ancient Israelites (we may believe) understood the typical character of their tabernacle services. And even if they failed to do so, they yet grasped very distinctly that the real efficacy of their sacrifices lay in the spirit with which they were offered. "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."¹ "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit."² "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God."³ These were the utterances of all the best and most spiritual amongst the Israelite people.⁴

And Jesus Christ, in His Sermon on the Mount, taught the same thing. So it becomes very clear to us that these sacrifices and observances of the Mosaic Law were only shadows or forecasts of the future. When they were ordained, men were not ready for that future; but at last they were, and then they were really and truly fulfilled in our Blessed Lord. He did not destroy what had gone before. He fulfilled it. He was the true Pattern to which all the Mosaic Law and ritual pointed. They were but faint outlines and dim shadowings forth, types and shadows, of the Truth;—Jesus Christ was THE TRUTH itself.

¹ 1 Sam. xv. 22.

² Psa. li. 17.

³ Micah vi. 8.

⁴ Isa. i. 10-20; Jer. vii. 22, 23; Ps. xl. 6-8.

LESSON X.

THE PROMISE TO DAVID—THE MESSIANIC TEACHING OF ISAIAH, HOSEA, ETC.

The Promise to David.

Read 2 Sam. vii. ; 1 Kings viii. 16-20 ; 1 Chron. xvii., xxii. 6-10, xxviii. 1-10.

FROM the death of Moses until the reign of David no advance was made in the idea of a Messiah. There was no further revelation.

But not very long after he became king over all Israel, David, struck by the apparent inconsistency between his own palace of cedar and the curtained dwelling of the Ark of God, was fired with an earnest longing to erect a fitting house for "God to dwell in." The prophet Nathan, to whom David confided his plan, entered into it heartily, and bade the king "God speed." A message from God, however, conveyed through the very same prophet, restrained David from the execution of his design. At the same time a consolatory promise was given to him. This promise marks an era in Messianic prophecy.

The promise to David was threefold : (1) God would build David a house, and establish him a throne and a kingdom which should last for ever. (2) David's son should build the house for God which

David himself might not build. The throne of his kingdom should be established for ever. (3) God would be the Father of David's Son.

This promise received its first fulfilment in Solomon. "The Lord hath performed His word that He spake, and I am risen up in the room of David my father, and sit on the throne of Israel as the LORD promised, and have built an house for the Name of the LORD God of Israel."¹ At some later time than the first giving of the promise, God had specially named Solomon to David—"Solomon thy son he shall build My house, and My courts: for I have chosen him to be My son, and I will be his Father."²

But the very terms of the promise must have prepared David for a higher and future fulfilment. His idea in proposing to build a house for God was entirely connected with the material building. The promise of God to build him an house when he was already dwelling in a palace of cedar must, no doubt, at once have suggested to him that God would make him the ancestor of a family which should have a special Divine blessing. This must have been his first thought. But behind the mere building of wood and stone, behind even the idea of a flourishing family of descendants, there lay the thought of a spiritual building, a building of the bodies and souls of men, which in the end, in the thoughts and utterances of an Apostle, entirely absorbed and overcame the idea of a material temple.³

Again, in the promise of a kingdom which should

¹ 1 Kings viii. 20; 1 Chron. xxii. 9, 10.

² 1 Chron. xxviii. 6.

³ Eph. ii. 19, 22; 1 Peter ii. 5; cp. also Numb. xii. 7, where we have the first intimation of the spiritual meaning of the word "house."

last for ever, David could not fail to see that there was a reaching onward, far beyond his own time or that of his son Solomon. And in the relation of father and son there was wrapt up some deeper truth than that of which Solomon could possibly be the exponent.

We are thus prepared to find that David, as both our Lord¹ and St. Peter² teach us, realized the higher and more spiritual side of the Promise. He understood too the real Sonship of the expected Christ, and foresaw that a kingdom which should last for ever must be ruled over by One Who should not be subject to corruption, by One therefore Who should rise again :³—for that He should be “brought into the dust of death” was also revealed to him (Ps. xvi.). Hence the promise was really fulfilled in its highest sense in Jesus Christ. Of Him the angel in announcing His birth, said, that “He shall be called the Son of the Highest : and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David : and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever ; and of His Kingdom there shall be no end.”⁴ Of Him in truth the Psalmist sang, as the Epistle to the Hebrews assures us, in the words, “Sit on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.”⁵ Of Him too, as the same Epistle tells us, David, having in his mind God’s promise, speaks in the second Psalm, “Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee.”⁶

The promise therefore to David advanced the idea of the Messiah in these ways—(1) It limited the line of the Messiah to the family of David ; and so (2) it

¹ Matt. xxii. 34-46.

² Acts ii. 30-34.

³ Ps. xvi. 10.

⁴ Luke i. 31-33.

⁵ Ps. cx. 1 ; Heb. i. 13.

⁶ Ps. ii. 7 ; Heb. i. 5.

taught His Kingship. But (3) in the continual endurance of the Kingdom, and of the House, were to be seen their spiritual nature ; and thus (4) the true Sonship, the Divinity of the Messiah, was set forth.²

The Messianic Teaching of Isaiah.

Read especially Isa. ii. 1-4, iv., vii. 10-16, ix. 1-7, xi. 1-10, xlii. xxv. 6-9, xxvi., xxxii., xxxv., xl. 1-8, xlii. 1-4, | xlix. 1-12, l. 5-9, lii. 13, liii., lv., lix. 19-21, lx., lxi., lxiii., lxv. 17-25.

The age of Isaiah saw a great impulse given to the prophetic teaching respecting the Messiah. The promise made to David, the effect of which upon his mind is evident in so many of the Psalms, now received that enlargement and illustration for which it had waited through three centuries.

The principal points in which Isaiah added to the already existing Messianic prophecy were these—(1) The announcement of a forerunner ; (2) the Birth from a Virgin ; (3) the anointing by the Holy Ghost ; (4) Isaiah greatly enlarged upon the ministry and work of the Messiah, and (5) upon His *victory through suffering* ; (6) His Resurrection and return to judgment ; (7) the gift of the Holy Ghost to His disciples ; and (8) the great Restitution of all things.

He does not add to the earlier prophecies respecting the Kingship of Christ, though he speaks of a King reigning in righteousness (xxxii. 1), nor yet to those concerning the admission of the Gentiles into the blessings of the Covenant, although he does speak of Jehovah's Servant being a light to the Gentiles, and His salvation unto the ends of the earth.

² The following passages, as illustrating the promise, should be read:—Zech. vi. 12, 13 ; John ii. 20, 21 ; Eph. i. 20-22 ; 1 Thess. iii. 15 ; Heb. iii. 5, 6.

1. *The prophecy of a Forerunner* (Isa. xl. 3-11). Already the descent, the office, and work of the Messiah had been foretold, but it was reserved for Isaiah to declare that the advent of the Messiah, the coming of the Servant of Jehovah, would be preceded by a herald. The duty of this herald should be to declare the near approach of Him Who should restore the power of God in men's hearts. He must prepare men for the reception of the Messiah by "making a highway for God, exalting the valleys, lowering the mountains and hills, straightening the crooked, smoothing the rough." And that St. John the Baptist did fulfil this prophetic announcement of his office is distinctly stated by St. Matthew. The burden of his preaching was *Repentance*. The best preparation for the Messiah's Kingdom, and the only real claim for admittance into it, must be change of heart. The winnowing fan of Him Who was coming after him, and Who was preferred before him, would, the Baptist declared, sift thoroughly the motives and actions of men. The Baptist, in seeking to give those who flocked to his teaching a true conception of the office of the coming Messiah, and of His Person, gave them the means of appreciating rightly all that was written in the prophets and in the Psalms of Him.

2. *The Birth of the Messiah from a Virgin* (Isa. vii. 10-16). The actual line of Messiah's descent had been already distinctly foretold. Isaiah himself reiterates promises of God already made, when he speaks of the rod coming forth of the stem of Jesse, and the Branch growing out of his roots.¹ But he goes beyond this. The actual birth of the Messiah shall be wonderful.

¹ Isa. xi. 1.

He shall be indeed the Son of David, but His descent shall be reckoned through a pure Virgin mother. No earthly father should be able to claim Him for his actual Son. God should be His Father. His Name should be Immanuel. He should be called "Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." And so it was. The word of the Lord as spoken by the prophet was fulfilled, as St. Matthew tells us, in Jesus Christ.¹

3. *The Unction of the Messiah by the Holy Ghost; His Office as Prophet* (Isa. xlii. 1-4, lxi. 1-3). These two passages were a further step in advance of former prophecies. Now for the first time we read of the actual gifts and offices bestowed upon the Messiah through the work of the Holy Ghost. The Name "My Servant" (xlii. 1) may undoubtedly be referred in the first instance to the nation of Israel,² which was a type of Christ. But St. Matthew appropriates the Name and the whole passage to our Lord,³ Who Himself declared, when preaching at Nazareth, that the Scripture He had just read to them (Isa. lxi. 1-3) was at that very moment "fulfilled in their ears," and in His own Person.⁴ The fulfilment of the prophecy was visibly accomplished in the descent of the Holy Ghost upon Jesus Christ at His Baptism.⁵ The work to which He was anointed was a purely spiritual one. The heart bruised by sin, and contrite, was to look to Him; the smoking flax of faith's small beginnings were to be kindled by Him into a living flame of love and devotion; Satan's captives were to be released from

¹ Matt. i. ; cp. Luke i. 31-35.

² Cp. Exod. iv. 22 ; Hos. xi. 1.

³ Matt. xii. 18-20.

⁴ Luke iv. 16-21.

⁵ Matt. iii. 17 ; Luke iii. 22 ; John i. 33, 34.

their bondage ; the mourner was to be comforted ; the acceptable rest of the Eternal Jubilee to be preached.

4. *The Ministry and Work of the Messiah.* These had as yet been foretold in barest outline. The outline is filled in by Isaiah with considerable detail. In chapter ix. 1, 2, the ministry in Galilee, as St. Matthew teaches us,¹ is foretold. In chapter xxxv. 5, 6, His miracles of mercy are described—the eyes of the blind opened, the ears of the deaf are unstopped, the lame man leaping as an hart, the tongue of the dumb singing.² In the rejoicing of the desert, and its blossoming as a rose (xxxv. 1), we hear beforehand Christ's invitation to the weary and heavy-laden to come to Him for rest and refreshment ;³ in the invitation to every thirsty one to come to the waters (lv. 1), we are reminded of His call, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink ;"⁴ in the fir-tree and the myrtle-tree coming up instead of the thorn and the briar (lv. 13), there is pictured forth the new birth of the Spirit.⁵ Moreover, in those tender and beautiful words in which he foretells of Christ's pastoral care (xl. 11), Isaiah but gives us beforehand a description of Him Who declared Himself to be the Good Shepherd Which giveth His life for the sheep.

5. *The Messiah must be victorious through suffering* (chap. lii. 13, liii.). We have seen that the very first announcement of a Messiah, when God promised a seed to Eve, involved the idea of suffering.⁶ But this passage of Isaiah unfolds the idea more completely. "It is the unravelling of Ps. xxii. and Ps. cx. It . . . is

¹ Matt. iv. 15, 16.

² Cp. Matt. xi. 5.

³ Matt. xi. 28-30.

⁴ John vii. 37.

⁵ John iii. 5 ; cp. Rom. vi. 19.

⁶ Gen. iii. 15 ; cp. Gen. xxii. ; Deut. xviii. 15 ("like unto me") ; Ps. xxii.

the most central, the deepest, and the loftiest thing that the Old Testament prophecy, outstripping itself, has ever achieved."¹ By Jew and Christian alike it is allowed that in this passage we have the prediction of the sufferings and death, and then passage to glory, of the Messiah. In many places in the New Testament allusions to and quotations from this prophecy are made. It is regarded as fulfilled in Christ. "In this prophecy Isaiah speaks so plainly of Christ, that he seems to perform the part of an evangelist rather than of a prophet."²

Opening with the assertion that in all His sufferings the Servant of Jehovah acts according to God's will (deals prudently), and sketching the result as seen in His Resurrection (exalted), Ascension (extolled), and Session (be very high) at God's Right Hand, the prophet passes on to describe very minutely the appearance of Messiah (lii. 14, liii. 2), His poor outward circumstances (the root out of a dry ground), His rejection by His people (liii. 3, 4), His sufferings for them (liii. 5, 6), His patience (liii. 7), His trial and death (liii. 8), and His burial (liii. 9). All this happened unto Him, because Jehovah has "made Him an offering for sin." It results in His triumphant victory, for "He sees of the travail of His soul, and is satisfied" (liii. 11). He becomes the Mediator and Intercessor. He is the true High Priest, offering up Himself. "He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

6. *The victory of Messiah, His Resurrection and return to judgment* (Isa. lxiii. 1-6). Edom, in the prophetic language, is the type of the enemies of God

¹ Hengstenberg.

² Jerome, quoted by Bp. Wordsworth.

in their worst and most virulent form. "Who will bring me into the strong city? who will lead me into Edom?"¹ had been already the cry of the Psalmist. The strongholds of Edom taken, the chiefest, bitterest foes will be overcome. By His descent into hell, and His Resurrection from the dead, our Lord subdued His and our great spiritual foes. But the final judgment upon them is reserved until the last day. This passage, therefore, represents to us under the image of the Victorious One coming from Bozrah (a chief fastness of Edom), with His threat of vengeance against His foes, (1) The Resurrection, and return to His disciples, of Jesus Christ after His Passion and Death, with the visible marks of His sufferings yet upon His garments.² But (2) regarding the blood-stains upon the Conqueror's garments as not His own, but that of His enemies, we have here the signs of the Redeemer's wrath—"the wrath of the Lamb"—upon those enemies. And thus there is shadowed forth Christ's Second Advent, in imagery borrowed long afterwards by St. John, when he describes the Victor as having on His vesture and on His thigh His Name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."³ In the Psalms⁴ we have already had a prophetic announcement of the Second Advent, and of the coming to judgment, but not in the same clear and precise language as here. We are sensible of a further lifting of the veil.⁵

¹ Ps. lx. 8.

² In this sense our Church appoints this passage for the Epistle on the Monday before Easter. Cp. Col. ii. 14.

³ Rev. xix. 11-16; cp. Rev. xiv. 19, 20.

⁴ See esp. Ps. ii. 9, 12; cx.

⁵ This blending together of two distinct events is not without its parallel in our Lord's discourse in Matt. xxiv.

7. *The promise of the Holy Spirit* (Isa. xxxii. 15, xlv. 3, lix. 19-21). The work of the Holy Spirit had from very early times been recognized in the spiritual government of men. Later on, the possessor of His gifts and graces was felt by David to be the only real stay of his spiritual life. His fervent prayer was, "Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me." And Solomon represents the Divine Wisdom as promising to pour out Her Spirit upon the penitent soul.¹ But that universal gift of the Holy Spirit of which Isaiah and his probable contemporary Joel speak,² was to be the result of Messiah's work and the consequence of His victory. And St. John teaches us³ by his explanation of our Lord's words at the Feast of Tabernacles, that such promises as are found in Isa. xii. 3, xxxv. 7, xlv. 3, lv. 1, are in truth promises of the gifts of the Spirit, which, poured out without measure upon the Servant of Jehovah, overflow to the assuaging the spiritual thirst of all who will come unto Him.

8. *Further results of Messiah's sufferings and victory.* These are portrayed with especial vividness and beauty by Isaiah. They occur on almost every page of his book. How beautiful is that description of the highway along which nothing unclean passes, but which leads the ransomed of the Lord to Zion,⁴ that strong city whose walls and bulwarks are salvation.⁵ How comforting the assurance, beyond which the Apostle of the Revelation could not go, that God "will swallow up death in victory," and "wipe away tears from off all faces."⁶ And how solemn those other

¹ Prov. i. 23.² Joel ii. 28.³ John vii. 38, 39.⁴ Isa. xxxv. 8-10.⁵ Isa. xxvi. 1.⁶ Isa. xxv. 8; cp. 1 Cor. xv. 54; Rev. xxi. 4.

words in which the prophet, in closing the long roll of his prophecy, utters the condemnation which in the end shall overtake the enemies of Jehovah: "Their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched."¹

The Messianic teaching of Hosea, Joel, Amos, and Micah.

Read especially—Hosea vi., xi., xiii.; Joel ii.; Amos ix.; Micah ii., iv., v., vii.

Contemporary with, or even earlier than Isaiah,² these four prophets, commissioned by God to denounce the sins of their nation, to threaten judgment, and to hold out the hope of pardon and restoration to the faithful and the penitent, gave utterance to words which were full of Messianic meaning, and which were, as St. Peter says, "as a light that shineth in a dark place."³ They themselves sought diligently as to what the Spirit testified, when using them as His instruments, "concerning the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." They knew that in what they said they were ministering not so much to themselves as to those who should live when Messiah had come.⁴ They wrote in times of national apostasy, and therefore of national depression. Their mission was too often only one of rebuke. But the Holy Spirit taught them to look on to brighter times, when the promises made to Abraham and David should be fulfilled, when there should be restoration and peace. We do not find in them that intense expression of personal joy and sorrow which is so conspicuous in

¹ Isa. lvi. 24.

² See Chronological Table at end of Part III.

³ 2 Pet. i. 19.

⁴ See 1 Pet. i. 11, 12.

David's Psalms. His own life, with its changes and vicissitudes, was the groundwork, if so we may speak, of his Messianic utterances. In his utterances there is no thought of national ruin or disaster; no note of restoration or return. The kingdom is in its strength; what more could David wish than that it should so continue? With the prophets it is different. Their yearnings are for the future, which shall bring with it renewed joy.

HOSEA looks forward to a time of restoration, when his now erring countrymen shall "seek after the Lord their God, and David their King."¹ Israel, with Hosea, is sometimes a type of Christ.² Its repentance and conversion is the symbol of Christ's Resurrection.³

JOEL is the prophet of judgment. But he tells of the "Teacher of Righteousness"⁴ sent by Jehovah; and announces a great outpouring of the Holy Ghost, which came on the Day of Pentecost.⁵

AMOS reiterates the promise given to David. His message is one of woe and sorrow. Israel—the ten tribes—should be extinguished as a nation, and carried into captivity, sifted as corn in a sieve, among all nations. Yet the true grain shall not be lost.⁶ And so there shall be restoration and peace. The prophet's message changes. Israel shall be restored. The hut of David (for it had so shared in the general ruin, that it was no longer as a palace of cedar, but rather as a simple hut or booth [tabernacle], and that, too, a

¹ Hosea iii. 5.

² Hosea xi. 1; cp. Matt. ii. 15.

³ Hosea xiii. 14. St. Paul gives us the correct rendering of this passage in 1 Cor. xv. 55.

⁴ Such is the true rendering of Joel ii. 23.

⁵ Acts ii.

⁶ Amos ix. 9.

fallen one) shall be re-erected. St James, in his speech in the council,² tells us how and when this promise of restoration began to be fulfilled. The hut of David was rebuilt in Jesus Christ. When He came, Israel's restoration—a spiritual restoration, higher and better than a material one—began. In St. Peter's visit to Cornelius Israel had commenced to take possession of "the remnant of Edom," or in the words of the paraphrase, adopted by St. James from the LXX. version, it was then that "the residue of men" began "to seek after the Lord."

MICAH foretells the Messiah, as both Jew and Gentile expositors allow, in the person of the "Breaker-up,"³ Who delivers His people from their prison-house. Christ has delivered His people from the bondage of Satan, and has "opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers." The peaceful gathering of believers to the spiritual Zion is described in the opening of chapter iv.

Micah names the place of Messiah's birth,³ as his contemporary Isaiah declares His parentage. And yet more, Micah, like Isaiah, declares the eternal existence of Him Who is to appear as the Messiah. He shall indeed go forth from Bethlehem, but that is not the beginning of His existence. "His goings forth have been from everlasting."⁴ "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

² Acts xv. 13-18.

³ Micah ii. 13.

³ Micah v. 2; cp. Matt. ii. 6; John vii. 42. The passage in St. Matthew is a paraphrase of, not an exact quotation from, the original. It expresses the same truth, but from a rather different side.

⁴ Micah v. 2.

LESSON XI.

THE MESSIANIC TEACHING OF JEREMIAH AND EZEKIEL.

Read especially—Jer. i., iii., ix., xi., xii., xxii., xxiii., xxx—xxxiii.; Ezek. i. 1-3, xiv., xviii., xxiv. 15-24, xxxiv., xxxvi., xxxvii., xlii. 1-4, xlvii. 1-12, xlviii. 35.

OF the remaining prophets who exercised their office before the last days of the kingdom of Judah, there are three who give notes of Messianic teaching. OBADIAH, prophesying in the early years of the Captivity, and pointing to the time of Christ, speaks of deliverance and holiness upon Mount Zion, and of the coming up of Saviours on it.¹ In his prophecy, "the kingdom shall be the Lord's," he anticipates the angel's announcement to Mary,² and the song of those great voices in heaven which cry, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ."³ JONAH in his own person, as our Lord Himself teaches us, is a type of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.⁴ NAHUM, in describing the joy which would be in Jerusalem at the destruction of Sennacherib and Nineveh, repeats from Isaiah words which reach far beyond their first and primary fulfilment. They are quoted by St. Paul as

¹ Obad. 17-21; cp. 1 Tim. iv. 16; James v. 20.

² Luke i. 33.

³ Rev. xi. 15, xix. 6.

⁴ Jonah i. 17, ii.; Matt. xii. 40, xvi. 4; Luke xi. 30.

prophetic of the Gospel times ;—"Behold, upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace."¹

The last days of the kingdom of Judah, and the times of the Captivity, are illustrated by the utterances of three great prophets, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel.

The Messianic Teaching of Jeremiah.

1. The first of these, JEREMIAH, was himself a living prophecy. Of all the Old Testament saints none, as Jeremiah, experienced sufferings so closely corresponding to those of Jesus Christ. Driven from his native city Anathoth, as Christ from Nazareth, by the animosity of the inhabitants, he speaks of himself as "like a lamb brought to the slaughter."² His inward struggles, as recorded in chapters xii. and xx., seem to foreshadow faintly the Agony in the Garden. The jest of the crowd, the sport of princes, rejected by the men of his own generation, and lamenting over the city which had treated him so cruelly, Jeremiah is a conspicuous type of Jesus Christ. We may pursue the parallel further. Called to the prophetic office while still a child, Jeremiah had the same early belief, as Jesus had, in his Divine mission.³ In his protests against the sins of both priests and prophets, the woes pronounced by our Lord against the Scribes and Pharisees are in a manner anticipated.⁴ Moreover, as for the joy set before Him, Jesus Christ endured the Cross and despised the shame, so His type, Jeremiah, amidst all his sufferings, was sustained by the

¹ Nah. i. 15; Isa. lii. 7; Rom. x. 15.

² Jer. xi. 19; cp. Isa. liii. 7.

³ Cp. Jer. i. 6; Luke ii. 49.

⁴ Cp. ix.; Jer. xxiii.

thought of future salvation,¹ and that not for Israel alone, but for Gentiles as well.²

Repeating earlier prophecies, Jeremiah frequently announces Messiah's descent from David, and as Isaiah specially brings out the Priesthood of Christ, so Jeremiah, evidencing thereby his minute acquaintance with earlier Scriptures, and in full keeping with a time of monarchical decadence, dwells particularly upon the Royalty and Kingship of Christ.³

In one remarkable passage, intended to convey comfort to the gathered remnant of the exiled people, Jeremiah proclaims the Divinity of Messiah. He is "Jehovah our Righteousness," a name which St. Paul seems to have had in his mind when he speaks of "Christ being made unto us . . . righteousness,"⁴ and as being "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."⁵

Once more, in his prophecy of the sorrow and weeping which should prevail when the Chaldæans should come down for their final attack upon Jerusalem, and should slaughter in their furious cruelty the inhabitants of the surrounding country, Jeremiah was in truth prophesying, as St. Matthew tells us, of a still more distant time, when the cry of the Holy Innocents, murdered for the sake of Jesus Christ, should rise up to heaven against the wicked and suspicious Herod.⁶

But there are three points of Messianic teaching which Jeremiah brings out with special prominence.

(1) He announces a coming time when, in the presence of a more personal manifestation of God, and

¹ Cp. Jer. xvii.

² Jer. xlv. 26, xlviii. 47, xlix. 6.

³ Jer. xxii. 4, xxiii. 5; cp. Isa. liii. 11.

⁴ 1 Cor. i. 30.

⁵ Rom. x. 4.

⁶ Jer. xxxi. 15; Matt. ii. 17, 18.

a more intimate union between Jehovah and His people, the Ark, with the Divine Shechinah enthroned between the Cherubim, and which had been for so many centuries the centre of national hope and longing, should neither be remembered nor visited any more.² The prophecy was fulfilled. When once destroyed, the Ark was never re-constructed. There was no Ark in the second Temple. Its glory had gone. Henceforth they must look for some other way in which they might enjoy the Presence of God amongst them. They shall do so. Jerusalem shall be "the Throne of Jehovah." But they must share their spiritual privileges with the Gentiles; for all nations shall be gathered unto Jerusalem. The Presence came with Jesus Christ, and ever abides. "Lo, I am with you alway." Christ hath passed indeed into the Heavens, but they who believe and trust in Him have "come unto Mount Sion, and unto the City of the Living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem."³

(2) Jeremiah foretells a New Covenant in the place of the Old, which shall be richer in spiritual gifts and graces.⁴ The New Covenant would not change the relation in which God stood to His people. Under both Covenants He is a God of loving-kindness and tender mercy, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin. But the way in which the relationship would be manifested would be changed. In this would consist the New Covenant. "Ye are not come unto the Mount which burned with fire."⁵ The New Covenant was not to be one of continual sacrifices "which could never take away sin." The Law was to be written, not

² Jer. iii. 14-17; cp. John i. 14.

³ Jer. xxxi. 31-34.

⁴ Heb. xii. 22.

⁵ Heb. xii. 18.

on stone, but in the hearts of the people.² The teaching should be no longer human, but Divine. Human instruments might, and would, still be used by God, but the real teacher would be the Holy Spirit. "Thy children," Isaiah had already said, "shall be all taught of God,"³ and our Lord afterwards confirmed the words. The Holy Ghost should be the guide into all truth. Just as St. Paul says, "Ye are our epistle . . . an epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the Living God."⁴

(3) Jeremiah prophesies of the perpetuity of the priests and Levites, connecting it closely with the promise that "David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel."⁵ This latter was an old promise made, as we have seen, to David, and to be interpreted, as the Angel teaches us (Luke i. 33), of Jesus Christ, the Eternal King, Who reigns for ever and ever. Hence the promise of perpetuity to "the priests and the Levites" must have an equally spiritual and, so to speak, Messianic meaning. With the abolition indeed of the Ark, the centre of their worship, the reason for the existence of priests and Levites ceased really to be. We have therefore in Jeremiah's words (a) a prophecy of a new order of men who should take the place of the ancient priests and Levites, set apart under Christ their great Shepherd to execute until the end of the world the office of Shepherds and Ministers to His people. But (b), in a still higher sense, we have here a prophecy of the realisation of Moses' promise to the Israelites, that they should be unto God "a

² Heb. viii. 10.

³ 1 Cor. iii. 2, 3.

⁴ Isa. liv. 13; John vi. 45.

⁵ Jer. xxxiii. 14-26.

kingdom of priests,"¹ a promise which, as St. Peter tells us, is fulfilled in the Christian Church: for "ye are a royal priesthood."² Jeremiah's words find their real echo in the words of St. John to the Seven Churches, and in the new song of the living creatures and of the elders, "Thou hast made us kings and priests unto God."³

The Messianic Teaching of Ezekiel.

As Jeremiah's ministry in the Holy Land was drawing to a close, the priest EZEKIEL, one of the Jewish captives living on the banks of the Chebar,⁴ received his mission. What Jeremiah was to the people left behind in Jerusalem, that Ezekiel was to the people transplanted to Chaldæa. Neither portion of God's people were left without their prophet. And by his inspiration Ezekiel was able to keep the exiles informed of what was passing at their old home. Ezekiel's mission was to the rebellious and hard-hearted house of Israel. He was assured of his mission by a vision of the glory of the Lord, which, having departed from the Temple at Jerusalem, was seen by Ezekiel beside the Chebar.

Ezekiel's prophecies are full of fire and energy and wonderful imagery. In strictly Messianic prophecy he does not add much to his predecessor's words. Like them he prophesies of the Divine Shepherd,⁵ Who should seek the lost and bind up the broken.⁶ Like them, he predicts the outpouring of the Holy Spirit,⁷

¹ Exod. xix. 6.² 1 Peter ii. 9.³ Rev. i. 6, v. 10.⁴ Either a tributary of the Euphrates, or one of the large canals of Babylonia.⁵ Ezek. xxxiv. 11-23.⁶ Cp. Isa. lxi. 1; Luke iv. 18.⁷ Ezek. xxxvi. 25-28, xxxix. 29.

and the union and restoration of Israel under David their prince for ever. And as Jeremiah had spoken of a New Covenant, and of the Ark with all its furniture becoming obsolete, so Ezekiel says that this New Covenant shall be an everlasting Covenant of peace, and that the Tabernacle of God shall be with them.² In the vision of the valley of dry bones² restored to life and movement, Ezekiel gives us a more vivid picture than any before him of Israel's restoration, of the necessity of spiritual awakening from trespasses and sins, and of the final resurrection of the dead.

But that which distinguishes Ezekiel, beyond all the prophets before him, is his teaching of personal responsibility, which anticipates with no uncertain sound the teaching of the New Testament. In this respect he is truly Messianic. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." "The wicked man, turning away from his wickedness, and doing that which is lawful and right, shall save his soul alive."³ "Make you a new heart and a new spirit, for why will ye die?" Ezekiel's standpoint was in truth different from that of his predecessors. They prophesied with Temple and kingdom still standing. While these existed, degraded and defiled as they might be, there was a hope that they by repentance and cleansing might be reinstated in their former position; and there was nothing, so long as David's descendants ruled, to throw doubt upon the promise made to him. But when Ezekiel prophesied all was changed. Temple and monarchy had alike been swept away. The only hope was in

² Ezek. xxxvii. 26, 27.

² Ezek. xxxvii. 1-14.

³ Ezek. xviii. ; cp. 1 John i. 8.

the future. And the only hope for that future was in the repentance of each individual soul of its own sin. By not mourning for the death of his wife, who was yet very dear to him,¹ Ezekiel signified to his fellow-captives that it was not for the captured city of Jerusalem that they were to mourn, but for their own sins. "Ye shall pine away for your iniquities, and mourn one towards another."²

And as Ezekiel thus laid stress on personal holiness, there was vouchsafed to him a wondrous vision of the future, a vision of a restored Temple, with the Glory of God returning to it from the east,³ and the holy waters issuing from the Temple, bringing life to everything on their banks, emblematical of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.⁴ This renewed Temple shall never be defiled, for it stands in the midst of the city whose name is "The Lord is there."⁵ Thus Ezekiel closes his prophecy of the glorious future. In later times it was to be taken up and enlarged by St. John in his vision of the New Jerusalem, with the Lord God as the Light thereof.

¹ Ezek. xxiv. 15-24.

² Ezek. xxiv. 23.

³ Ezek. xliii. 1-5.

⁴ Ezek. xlvii. 1-12.

⁵ Ezek. xliii. 7, xlviii. 35.

LESSON XII.

THE MESSIANIC TEACHING OF DANIEL, HAGGAI, ZECHARIAH AND MALACHI.

Read especially Dan. ii, vii, viii., ix, xii.; Haggai ii. 1-9; Zech. iii.,
vi. 9-15, ix. 9, xi. 3-14, xii. 9, 10, xiii. 7; and Mal. iii., iv.

The Messianic Teaching of Daniel.

THE last of the three great prophets whose Messianic teaching we are now considering was Daniel. It is as the prophet of "the last things" that Daniel is specially full of interest to us. He foreshortens the whole history of the world to the end of time, and while many of his prophecies have been conspicuously fulfilled, others are still awaiting their accomplishment.

When Daniel entered upon his prophetic office, the prophecies respecting the Messiah were, except in one great particular, complete. His birth and descent had been announced, His sufferings had been plainly revealed; His offices of Prophet, Priest and King, had been distinctly foretold. There remained but to answer the question, which must have often arisen in the heart of the pious Israelite, "When shall these things be?" And the time was now come for an answer to be given. In the earlier prophecies, the Coming of the Messiah, and the Return from the Captivity, with its accompanying and subsequent blessings, had

been so far blended together as to produce amongst the Jews of the time of the Captivity the belief that the one would be the herald and precursor of the other. But the Captivity was in truth to be but the commencement of a further term of probation for the chosen people. In the removal of God's visible Presence in the Shechinah of Glory they must learn to trust in His spiritual Presence, and to desire all the more earnestly the coming of Immanuel.

Amid the sorrows of the Captivity, and the trouble and distress which was to harass them for so many generations after the return from Babylon, they might lose heart and hope altogether. God sustained them, therefore, with a more particular prophecy of Messiah's time than any they had yet received. Thus the question so anxiously asked was answered. The answer came through Daniel. It came in a threefold manner.

First, The return from the Captivity would not be the signal for Messiah's Coming. There must be many changes and disturbances in the world before the fulness of time should have come. This was signified in the dream of Nebuchadnezzar and the first of Daniel's four visions. The great image, whose "brightness was excellent," of the king's dream represented "human empire in its well-proportioned might, as formed in some measure in the image of God." The four beasts of Daniel's vision represent the same empire, but in its other and lower developments—"its brute force," "its wasting power." The dream and the vision mean the same thing. There should be four kingdoms or empires, following each other in succession, of which the first, the head of gold, the lion with eagle's wings, was the Babylonian,

then existing in its full strength. The second was the Medo-Persian, its double nationality, so to speak, represented by the two arms of the image, and the greater power of the Persian element by the bear raised upon one side. The third empire, the Grecian, is represented in its swiftness of conquest by the thighs of the image, and the quick-moving leopard or panther, with its four wings; the animal's four heads denoting the intellectual power of the Greeks. The fourth empire, more powerful and formidable than any of its predecessors, its strength denoted by the iron, and its terribleness so great that no name can be found for the beast which represents it, is the Roman. Upon this last empire the interest centres. It was to have two periods:—one of undoubted strength, represented by the iron legs; the other of division, and therefore of less strength, represented by the mingled iron and clay, the ten toes of the image, the ten horns and the eleventh horn of the fourth beast. For during its rule another kingdom, as a stone cut out without hands, shall be set up by the God of Heaven, before whose power and irresistible might all the former kingdoms or empires shall "become like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors." This kingdom shall never be destroyed. Its King is one like the "Son of Man"—of human birth therefore, though not a mere man, for He comes, as God of old came, in the clouds of Heaven.² No one has ever doubted but that by this fifth divine kingdom is meant the kingdom of Christ.

² See Exod. xiii. 21, 22, xiv. 24, xvi. 10, xl. 34; 1 Kings viii. 10. The high priest plainly understood our Lord as referring to this passage (Matt. xxvi. 64), and as claiming therefore to be the Messiah of Daniel's prophecy.

When the Baptist, and our Lord and His disciples, proclaimed that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand, every one understood the term, for these prophecies of Daniel had made them familiar with it. But Daniel's later visions, as we shall see, foretell plainly that "the time would be long" before this Divine Kingdom should have "broken in pieces and have consumed" all the other kingdoms. Hence the continuance of the fourth empire (as indeed of the other three, Dan. vii. 12), in some form or other, represented by its subdivisions, was to be prolonged. It represents "world-power" as opposed to the Divine, and as such will continue until the full time is come. The prophecies about the first three kingdoms have all been fulfilled. Daniel's second vision¹ of the ram and he-goat, which related to the second and third kingdoms, with its prophecy of Alexander the Great's swift conquests, and of the cruelties and persecutions of Antiochus Epiphanes, the Antichrist of the Old Testament, has also been fulfilled. The meaning of the prophecies are made plain by their fulfilment. But much relating to the fourth empire is still in the future. For its explanation we must wait the fulfilment. "Prophecy is given as a witness to God when the time comes, not to enable us to prophesy."

Second, Christ's Kingdom then was not to commence with the return from the Captivity. Yet it should begin within a certain definite time. This was revealed in Daniel's third vision.² The seventy years' Captivity were drawing to an end. Daniel, fulfilling

¹ In the explanation of this second vision, as in his subsequent visions, the ministry of angels is very plainly set forth. Cp. Heb. i. 13.

² Dan. ix.

Jeremiah's prophecy,¹ interceded in prayer for his people, and in answer God again "lifts the veil of the future." Seventy weeks² were determined upon the people (the Jews) and upon the Holy City (Jerusalem). The reckoning was to be "from the going forth of the command to build and restore Jerusalem." There were four edicts³ given with regard to Jerusalem, any one of which corresponds approximately (and that is all the prophecy intends) with the Coming of "Messiah the Prince," which was to be at the end of the sixty-ninth week. In the midst of the seventieth week Messiah was to be cut off—He was to die, that is, a violent death; the sacrifice was to cease, the city and sanctuary were to be destroyed. The edict which agrees most closely with the date of our Lord's death, and with the prophecies, is that of Artaxerxes Longimanus in his seventh year, B.C. 458, when he commissioned Ezra and gave him absolute power to organize the people "according to the law of his God."⁴ Adding to this date 69 weeks, or 483 years, we are brought to A.D. 26, the year in which, according to the received chronology, our Lord began His public ministry.

Third, The last element in the coming of MESSIAH'S Kingdom was this—"The time would be long," even after Messiah came, before all His enemies should be subdued, and His Kingdom be established in its full strength. This was revealed in Daniel's fourth vision. In that vision Christ Himself appeared to the prophet

¹ Jer. xxix. 10-13.

² Weeks of years, 490 years therefore. The key is given in Ezek. iv. 5, 6.

³ Viz., that of Cyrus (Ezra i. 1-4, vi. 3-5), of Darius (Ezra vi. 1-12), of Artaxerxes to Ezra (vii. 11-26) of Artaxerxes to Nehemiah (ii. 1-8).

⁴ Ezra vii. 14.

in wondrous form, even as He appeared to St. John centuries after in the Isle of Patmos. The vision extends through the last three chapters of Daniel's book. The greater portion of it is a prophecy of the contests between Egypt (the King of the South) and Syria (the King of the North), with the evil work of Antiochus Epiphanes. But as in our Lord's discourse, in which He blends together prophecies of the last days of Jerusalem and of the final judgment, so here the prophecy imperceptibly reaches on to the end of time. We have indeed our Lord's own authority for thus regarding it.¹ One part of the prophecy had already been fulfilled in the time of Antiochus, but it was to be again and equally fulfilled, as our Lord teaches us, when the Romans encamped against Jerusalem, and destroyed both city and temple. Then again of the prophecy of "a time, times, and a half" (or three and a half years), there was a first fulfilment in the three and a half years' persecution under Antiochus. But that persecution is only a type of a still more fierce persecution yet awaiting God's Church,² in the last days.

Again, in our Lord's discourse, though the near and the far off are blended together, yet there are parts of it which unmistakeably refer to His Second Coming.³ So in this prophecy of Daniel. We have in chap. xii. 1 that reference to God's Book with which we have already been made familiar in the Pentateuch and the

¹ Cp. Dan. xii. 11; Matt. xxiv. 15.

² The greater fierceness of the persecution seems indicated by the longer time, 1290 days instead of three and a half years, or 1260 days nearly. The more learned teacher may read with interest and advantage Joseph Mede's "*Revelatio Antichristi*," Mede's Works, 1667, p. 717.

³ See especially vv. 36-51.

Psalms,¹ and which evidently points to some future time of trial and judgment.

The most clear and distinct announcement, however, made by this prophecy is that of the resurrection of the dead.² In no other passage of the Old Testament is this great doctrine so plainly revealed. Of its fulfilment our Blessed Lord was the first instance. Nor is this all:—that resurrection is but the prelude to a separation, a judgment. Some shall awake “to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt.”³ “Then they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.” “But of that day and of that hour knoweth no man;” for the Book is sealed even to the time of the end.⁴

The Messianic Teaching of Haggai.

There were three prophets after the return from captivity. The first of these was HAGGAI. His mission was to arouse the flagging energies of the Jews in the rebuilding of the second Temple. He encouraged them with the thought of the glory which awaited this Temple in the future. It might

¹ Exod. xxxii. 32; Ps. lvi. 8, lxix. 28.

² Dan. xii. 2.

³ Cp. John v. 28, 29.

⁴ Daniel unites in his book many varieties of prophecy. It has been well said, “Largest and least, the remote future and the near, the conflict of the evil and the good, and its final issue, man’s free agency and God’s overruling Providence, Judgment, and Mercy, the Death of the Redeemer and His everlasting Kingdom, His presence as Man; yet more than Man, at the right hand of God, the passing away of the Old Covenant and its sacrifices, and the bringing in of the New, forgiveness of sins and the gift of righteousness, are all concentrated in him.”—PUSEY on Daniel, p. 291.

be in the eyes of those who remembered the first Temple "in comparison as nothing;" within it there might be no Ark of the Covenant, no fire from heaven on its altar, no holy oil; without, no visible cloud of glory would rest upon it; yet its glory should excel the glory of the former Temple, for "the Desire of all nations should come" to it. And He came. The prophecy was fulfilled; fulfilled when Simeon took the Infant Jesus into his arms; fulfilled when the Divine Child sat amongst the doctors; fulfilled when the Prophet of Nazareth of Galilee healed the sick, and taught the people within the sacred precincts. The coming was the prelude to that second and final shaking of the things of the Old Covenant in which, as the Apostle teaches, the prophecy was to find its complete accomplishment.¹

The Messianic Teaching of Zechariah.

A few months after Haggai, the second of the three prophets, ZECHARIAH received his call. He repeats from Isaiah and Jeremiah the prophecy of Christ as "the BRANCH,"² and from Joel the outpouring of the Holy Spirit;³ and in the crowning of Joshua the high priest with the double crown, we have a symbolic act, prophetic of the union of the Priestly and Kingly Offices in Christ Jesus.⁴ There may be also a prophecy of the remission of sins wrought by Jesus Christ, Who, though He knew no sin, was made sin for us, in the change of Joshua's garments.⁵ To the prophecy of the opened fountain,⁶ there seems a clear

¹ See Heb. xii. 26.

² Zech. xii. 10; cp. Joel ii. 28.

³ Zech. iii.

⁴ Zech. iii. 8, vi. 12.

⁵ Zech. vi. 9-11.

⁶ Zech. xiii. 1.

reference as fulfilled in our Lord in Rev. i. 5.¹ So also when Jesus says, "I and My Father are One," He clearly fulfils the prophecy of "the Man Who is the Fellow of the Lord of Hosts."² Besides these passages there are four others which are distinctly referred to in the New Testament as fulfilled in our Lord. These are the call to the daughter of Jerusalem to rejoice at the advent of her King;³ the slave's price given for the Shepherd, and cast unto the potter;⁴ the mourning of the Jews, and of all His enemies, when they shall understand the sin they have committed, as "they look upon Him Whom they have pierced," when He cometh with the clouds;⁵ and the call to smite the Shepherd and scatter the sheep⁶ mentioned by Christ Himself.

The Messianic Teaching of Malachi.

MALACHI, the contemporary of Nehemiah, was the last, or "seal," of the prophets. As he warned the people of the consequences which must attend upon their evil ways, he prophesies to them of a coming day of the Lord, a day which should be ushered in with the solemn preparatory notes of the messenger already spoken of by Isaiah.⁷ The mes-

¹ Cp. Heb. ix. 14; 1 Peter i. 19.

² John x. 30; Zech. xiii. 7. "Fellow," i.e. neighbour, in the sense of equality of position.

³ Zech. ix. 9; Matt. xxi. 5; John xii. 15.

⁴ Zech. xi. 12, 13; Exod. xxi. 32; Matt. xxvii. 9, 10. How St. Matthew came to substitute the name of Jeremiah for that of Zechariah it is impossible to say. He may very possibly have been quoting from memory, and thus have made a mistake.

⁵ Zech. xii. 10; John xix. 34, 37; Rev. i. 7.

⁶ Zech. xiii. 7; Matt. xxvi. 31.

⁷ Mal. iii. 1, 2; Matt. xi. 10.

senger, as we know from the New Testament, was John the Baptist, "the Elias who was for to come."¹ The Lord, Whose way he was to prepare, was Jesus Christ Himself, Whose fan was in His hand. But though the day was to begin then, it would not end quickly. It would be, as it were, one long day of the Lord until the Judgment came, when the wicked should be burned as stubble, but upon those who feared God's Name, the Sun of Righteousness should arise with healing in the hem or skirts of His garment.²

Thus the prophetic roll closes. Four centuries and more were to elapse before another prophet's voice should sound, and the Word be made flesh, and dwell among men.

¹ Cp. Mal. iv. 5; Luke i. 17; Mark ix. 11, 12.

² Mal. iv. 1, 2; 2 Peter iii. 7. The "wings" were really the hem or skirt of the raiment. Cp. Mark v. 28.

APPENDIX.

A SHORT TABLE SHOWING THE GRADUAL UNFOLD- ING OF THE MESSIANIC TEACHING.

| Centuries before Christ. | MESSIANIC TEACHING. | Passages of Scripture. |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| | The idea of a Messiah <i>conquering through suffering</i> involved in the first mention of a Redeeming Seed, . | Gen. iii. 15. |
| | The " <i>rest</i> " as a consequence of the Messiah's victory hinted at in Lamech's speech, . . . | Gen. v. 29. |
| XX. | The Messiah's <i>line of descent</i> through Abraham declared, but the blessings to come through Him to be shared by all nations, . . . | Gen. xii. |
| | <i>The nature</i> of Messiah's suffering— <i>death</i> —prefigured in the Sacrifice of Isaac, . . . | Gen. xxi. |
| XVIII. | The Messiah's <i>line of descent again limited</i> , by Jacob's prophecy, to the family of Judah. His <i>Kingship</i> hinted at, . . . | Gen. xlix. 10. |
| XV. | The Messiah's <i>Priesthood</i> and <i>Mediatorship</i> prefigured in the Ordinances of Mount Sinai, as well as the reason of His death as a <i>Sacrifice for Sin</i> more plainly set forth, . . . | Exodus. |
| | The Divinity of the Messiah faintly hinted at in Balaam's prophecy of The Star, . . . | Numb. xxiv. 17. |
| | The Messiah's <i>prophetical</i> office foretold in Moses' promise, . . . | Deut. xviii. 15, 18; Acts iii. 22, vii. 37. |

| Centuries before Christ. | MESSIANIC TEACHING. | Passages of Scripture. |
|---|--|--|
| XI. | The Messiah's descent again limited to family of David. His <i>eternal Kingship</i> plainly revealed, and as a consequence, His <i>eternal Priesthood</i> and His <i>Godhead</i> . | 2 Sam. vii. 13, 16; Ps. ii., lxxii., xvi., cx. Cp. Matt. xxii. 44. |
| VIII. | The outpouring of the Holy Spirit foretold as a mark of the days of the Messiah, | Joel ii. 28-31; Acts ii. 17. |
| The sufferings of the Redeemer as preceding and issuing in His Victory clearly foretold, | Isa. liii. | |
| VII. V. | The importance and dignity of the Messiah's Work marked by the prophecy of a Forerunner, | Isa. xl.; Mal. iii. |
| VI. | The Coming of the Messiah shall do away with the things of the Old Covenant; The spiritual nature of the Law set forth, | Jer. iii. 14-17. |
| MESSIAH becomes at last a proper name for the Redeemer. The <i>time</i> of Messiah's Coming foretold, with the violence of His Death. The spiritual nature of His Kingdom, and its ultimate victory over all the kingdoms of the earth announced, | Dan. ix. 25-27, ii. 44. | |
| The Resurrection of the Dead, as a consequence of Messiah's Victory, now plainly revealed, | Dan. xii. | |
| VI. V. | Certain details as to Messiah's life on earth prophesied, and a last warning of the Coming to Judgment, | Haggai ii.; Zech. ix-xiii.; Mal. iii., iv. |

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